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VOLUME 16, No. 5 FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY April 1990

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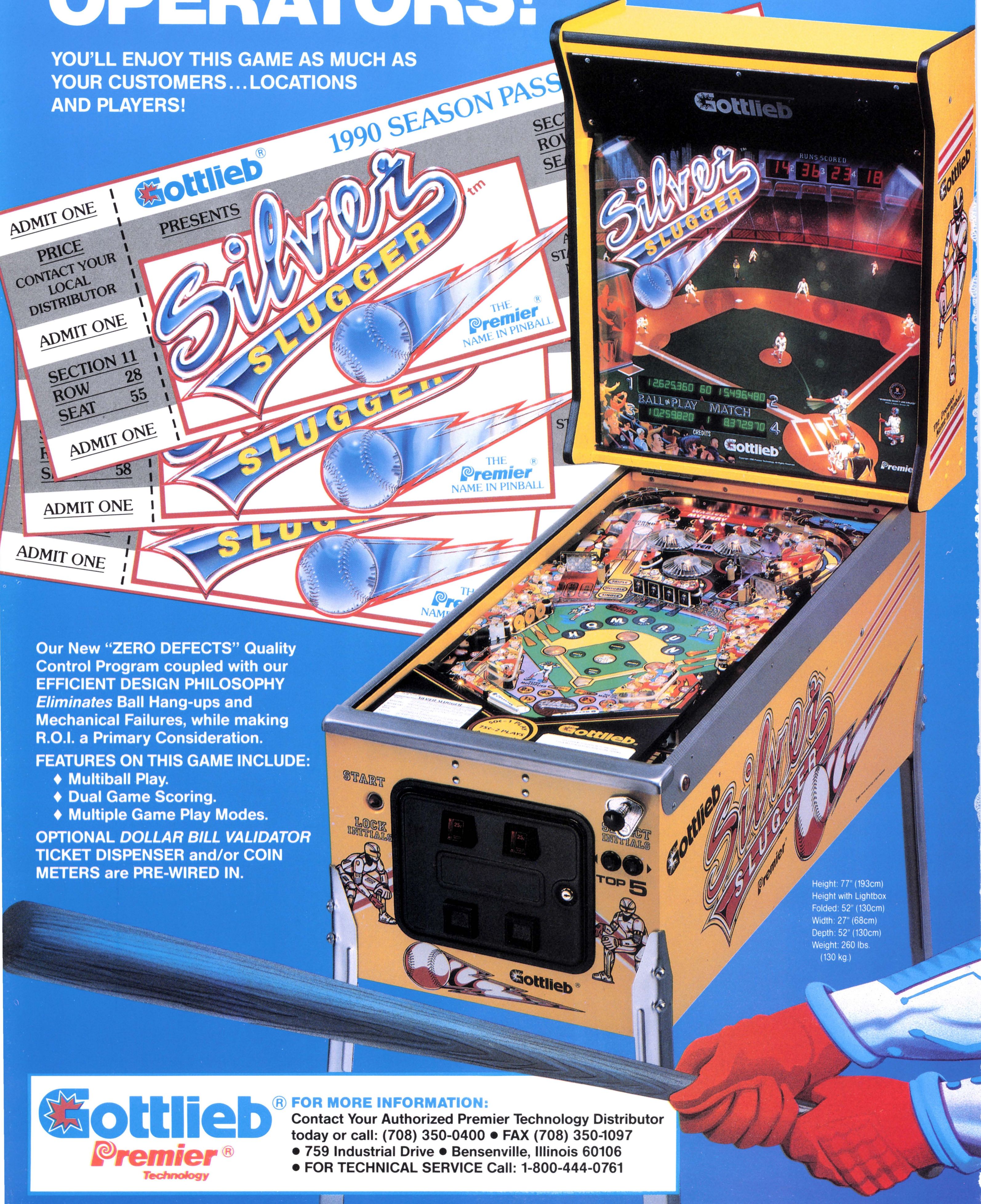
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EQUIPMENT POLL BALLOT

Please rate the games on a scale of one to ten, with ten representing superior earnings. A space has been allowed under each manufacturer's name for a write-in entry.

VIDEO

Ameri Corporation:	
Ameri Darts	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
American Technos:	
Block Out	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
WWF Super Stars	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
American Sammy:	
Omega Fighter	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Task Force Harrier	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Atari:	
Badlands	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Championship Sprint	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Cyberball	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Cyberball 2027	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Escape From Planet of Robot Monsters	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Final Lap	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Four Trax	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Hard Drivin'	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Klax	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
RoadBlasters	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Skull & Crossbones	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
S.T.U.N. Runner	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Tetris	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Bally Midway:	
Arch Rivals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Tri-Sports	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Capcom:	
Buster Bros.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Capcom Bowling	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Final Fight	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Strider	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
U.N. Squadron	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Willow	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Data East:	
Midnight Resistance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Robo Cop	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sly Spy	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Too Crude	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Vapor Trail	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Volleyball	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Fabtek:	
Cabal	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Dynamite Duke	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sports Match	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toki	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Game Tek:	
Wheel of Fortune	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Irem:	
Dragon Breed	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
I-VICS:	
Meta Fox	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Jaleco:	
Astayanax	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Big Run	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Konami:	
Aliens	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Bottom of the 9th	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Crime Fighters	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
TMNT (dedicated)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Leland:	
All Am. Football	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Pig Out	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Team Quarterback	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Super Off Road	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Quarterback	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Nintendo:	
Play Choice-10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Super Mario 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
TMNT (kit)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Premier:	
Exterminator	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Romstar:	
Aqua Jack	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Cal. 50	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Castle of Dragon	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Champion Bowling	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Final Blow	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Rambo III	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sega:	
AfterBurner	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
E.S.W.A.T.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Galaxy Force	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Golden Axe	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Line of Fire	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
OutRun	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Shadow Dancer	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Shinobi	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Super Hang On	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Super Monaco GP	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Turbo OutRun	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

SNK:

Search and Rescue	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Beast Busters	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Gang Wars	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Merchanized Attack	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sky Adventure	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Street Smart	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strata:

Golden Tee Golf	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Taito:

Battle Shark	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Cadash	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Chase H.Q.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Crime City	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Nastar Warrior	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Night Striker	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Operation Thunderbolt	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Operation Wolf	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
S.C.I.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
U.S. Classic	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Violent Fight	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Tecmo:

Ninja Gaiden	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Tecmo World Cup '90	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Williams:

NARC	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

PINBALL

Bally:

Elvira/Party Monsters	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Mousin' Around	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
The Bally Game Show	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Data East:

Monday Night Football	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Phantom of the Opera	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Robo Cop	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Gottlieb/Premier:

Bone Busters	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Lights, Camera, Action!	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Silver Slugger	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Williams:

Bad Cats	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Banzai Run	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Black Knight 2000	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Cyclone	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Earthshaker	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
High Speed	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Jokerz!	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Pinbot	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Police Force	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Taxi	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Whirlwind	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
____________________	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

OTHER EQUIPMENT:

Mfg. ____________________

Game____________________ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

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NEWS BULLETIN

■ **D.C. Conference update....**Here are the scheduled times for key events being held in conjunction with the 1990 Government Affairs Conference in Washington, D.C.:

Monday, April 30: 9 a.m.-12 p.m.: Political Workshop and Issues Briefing (Dollar Coin Legislation, Video Gaming Amusement Equipment, Jukebox Licensing, and Cigarette Vending); 12-2 p.m.: Luncheon with congressional speakers; 5-7 p.m.: "Carnival for Life," an industry benefit to honor D.C.-area anti-drug groups (over 100 children and group leaders are expected).

Tuesday, May 1: morning/afternoon: Visits with congressmen (individual scheduling and meeting sites to be coordinated by AMOA's Washington staff); 5:30-8 p.m.: AMOA-AAMA Congressional Reception/AMOA-AAMA Congressional Pinball, Coin-Op Basketball, and Electronic Dart Tournament.

All continental breakfasts, lunches, and briefings/workshops will take place at the Washington Court on Capitol Hill. Exceptions are the "Carnival for Life" (Departmental Auditorium) and the Congressional Reception/Tournament (Longworth House Office Building Cafeteria).

For more information on the conference and/or tournament—including housing and registration forms and tournament invitations—contact AMOA's Chicago headquarters, 111 E. Wacker Drive, Suite 600, Chicago, IL 60601; (312) 565-4602.

■ **Kids get free play....**Terminally ill children who visit the Kids Village of Give Kids the World in Kissimmee, Fla., now have their own arcade with games set on free play. This is the result of continued efforts by Bill Miller of WGM Amusement in Kissimmee, the Florida Amusement-Vending Association (FAVA), and the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA).

The center of Kids Village features "Clayton's Club Car," a restored train caboose housing three video games, a pinball machine, and a jukebox. The following companies are responsible for game donations: Dynamo, Konami, NSM/Loewen-America, SNK Corp. of America, Midway Manufacturing Co./Williams Electronics Games, Birmingham Vending (Orlando office), and Brady Distributing (Orlando office). Nintendo of America also supported the project.

Clyde Knupp, past president of the Amusement and Music Operators Association, is responsible for bringing the project to the attention of AAMA executive vice president Bob Fay. "Bill Miller told me he had placed some games at the Kids Village, but he thought it would be great if we could get new games for the room, so I called Bob Fay," Knupp said.

According to Fay, "Our members are very enthusiastic about projects like this. As soon as they knew what Give Kids the World was, they were ready to do whatever was necessary." As games are replaced during the life of the village, the older ones will be donated to FAVA for other charitable purposes.

The mission of Give Kids the World is "to provide joyful experiences for children between the ages of three and 18, who have life-threatening conditions and may not survive." Kids Village has been made possible through donations of every kind by hundreds of corporate and individual volunteers.

■ **NDA tourney nears....**Darters from around the globe will converge in Las Vegas on May 2-5 for the $25,000 International Team Championships of Electronic Darting, or "Team Dart V." Presented by the AMOA National Dart Association, the fifth annual tournament features teams from the United States, Germany, Japan, Canada, and France. It will be staged at the Sahara Hotel and Casino.

■ **Jukebox pact reached....**The three U.S. performing rights organizations—ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC—and AMOA have reached an agreement for the licensing of "non-dramatic public performance of copyrighted music on jukeboxes," retroactive to Jan. 1. The announcement was made at a press conference in New York City on March 22.

Under the agreement, operators will pay $275 for their first jukebox. Boxes two through 10 will cost an additional $55; 11 or more carries a $48 fee. The "break even" point is 19 boxes, or the point at which the fees equal the former $63-per-box agreement. We'll have full details in our May issue.

■ **Rowe names CEO....**Arnold S. Greenhut has been appointed chairman and chief executive officer of Rowe International Inc. and its parent company, R.I. Holdings Inc. He was previously a director of R.I. Holdings Inc. Greenhut succeeds Bruce K. Cowles, who announced his plan to retire for personal reasons.

Greenhut has senior management experience in corporations, including Litton Industries Inc. and Gulf + Western Industries Inc.

■ **Kiddie association meets....**The newly formed American Kiddie Ride Association held its first meeting on March 10 in conjunction with ACME '90. Some 65 people were in attendance, including kiddie ride operators and manufacturers, according to association president Thomas Theisen of Theisen Vending. There are presently 41 members, but the total is expected to exceed 100 by year's end.

Among the actions taken were ratification of the bylaws and official election of the original board of directors; a vote to take a stance in support of the dollar coin; and a presentation on insurance from Rick Rockford of the Horizon Agency in Minneapolis.

"Obtaining decent insurance rates—or insurance at all—is one of the major problems in the kiddie ride industry," Theisen said. "The insurance program that Mr. Rockford has for us will save operators half of what they pay now. It's $19 per year, per ride, for $1 million of coverage."

The next AKRA board meeting is scheduled for Oct. 27 in New Orleans, in conjunction with the AMOA show. The membership is invited to attend.

■ **Tavern tourney begins....**Regional tournament play for the Coors Light World Series of Bar Games, a cash tournament featuring play on pool, electronic darts, coin-op basketball, and video bowling, kicked off on March 22-26 in St. Paul, Minn. According to Larry Meuth, president of Sports Tournaments of America, three other regional tournaments are scheduled for this month: April 1-4: Atlantic City, N.J.; April 10-14: New Orleans, La.; April 18-22: Las Vegas, Nev.

Winners at the regional level will qualify to compete for $150,000 in cash and prizes at the national tournament in Las Vegas on July 5-10.

The Coors Light World Series of Bar Games is open to men and women at least 21 years old. Participants may compete in local taverns for a $2 entry fee per sport. Anyone who didn't qualify in a bar by March 15 can enter directly by paying a $100 entry fee and $20 registration fee.

For more information, contact Sports Tournaments of America at (713) 376-2244.

■ **Taito moves....**Taito America Corp. has moved its offices to a new 32,000-square-foot facility; the address is 390 Holbrook Drive, Wheeling, IL 60090. According to president Joe Dillon, "We needed larger facilities to service our customers in a more efficient manner. The move to expanded quarters was also a positive expression of confidence in Taito's growth and the future growth of the industry. We all worked hard to get here, and we're very proud of our new space. Our customers, suppliers, and friends are invited to stop by and check us out."

Taito's telephone and FAX numbers remain the same: (708) 520-9280 and (708) 520-1309, respectively.

■ **New directory released....**Amusement Business has published the 1990 edition of the Funparks Directory, a comprehensive guide to international tourist attractions, theme parks, and funparks. This annual sourcebook contains over 2,500 listings of amusement and theme parks, water attractions, tourist attractions, family entertainment centers, kiddielands, zoos, and state/national parks in the United States, Canada, and overseas.

Members of the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) are designated throughout the book. Facilities are cross-referenced in an alphabetical index.

Copies of the directory are available for $48 each; the price includes first-class postage and handling. Orders must be prepaid and sent to: Amusement Business, Single Copy Department, P.O. Box 24970, Nashville, TN 37202; or call (615) 321-4251 for more information.

■ **Century moves....**Century Vending and Distributors Inc. has moved to a new address. It's 12817 S. Halldale Ave., Gardena, CA 90249. The phone number is (213) 532-2351; the FAX is (213) 532-2355.

■ **McComb passes away....**Harry McComb, an employee in the service department at Wells-Gardner Electronics Corp. since 1957, died of a fatal heart attack on Feb. 15 at the age of 57. He had served as service manager for approximately the last 10 years.

"I am saddened by the passage of Harry McComb," said Randy Fromm of Fromm's Arcade School. "He and I co-authored a widely read article about monitors and picture tube replacement, reprints of which I still use as a handout in my classes. Always ready to help wherever he could, Harry was a good friend to me and the industry. I miss him already."

■ **Planned merger off....**Several months ago, plans were in the works for a merger between coin-op basketball manufacturers Adastra and Pop-A-Shot. Now, according to Adastra president Foster Brashear, it isn't going to happen. Over time, though, certain things happened to make Brashear change his mind.

"Though we aren't going through with the merger, our relationship remains cordial," he said. "We're still doing contract manufacturing for them, but that's it. They don't represent us, and we don't represent them."

■ **Powers joins Merit....**Industry veteran Bernie Powers, formerly of Bally Manufacturing Corp. and Arachnid, is the new director of marketing for Merit Industries. He spent the '70s and most of the '80s with Bally.

"His experiences with Bally closely correlate with where Merit markets its products today," said Merit president Peter Feuer. "Having experience with both gaming equipment and amusement games makes for a good fit in our organization."

Powers has BS degrees in marketing and management, as well as a master's degree in business administration. Last year, he was honored in Illinois with three awards for excellence in exporting, including the Governor's Trophy and Exporter of the Year Award.

"Merit is involved with the international marketplace; I trust my involvement will only enhance Merit's position," Powers said. "I have worked with Merit's international distributors, as well as domestic ones, in the past."

■ **ACME plush winners....**Merchandise supplier Craneables awarded eight companies "a Craneable route bag" at an ACME drawing. The winners were Time Out Amusements in Columbus, Ohio; I.D. Video in Houston, Texas; Groner's Galaxy World in Dowagiac, Mich.; Champion Amusements in Omaha, Neb.; Allstar in Thornton, Ill.; Putt-Putt Golf and Games in Fort Wayne, Ind.; Wizard in Manitowac, Wis.; and Silverball in Texarkana, Texas, which won three such bags.

Also, Great Games in Glendale, Ariz., won the grand prize of a free premium assortment.

■ **Seminar dates added....**Three dates have been added to Star Tech Journal's Technical Seminar Program, designed for advancing game technicians. It's two full days of inside repair tips and hands-on labs, which will teach the service person troubleshooting skills and how to repair coin-op games.

The dates and sites are: April 21-22 at New England Coin in Norwood, Mass.; May 5-6 at General Coin in Seattle, Wash.; and May 19-20 at Betson Pacific in San Francisco, Calif. Previous seminars were staged successfully this past winter in Chicago; Charlotte, N.C.; Orlando, Fla.; and Columbus, Ohio. Advance registration is $250 per person, with a 10 percent discount for multiple registrations from the same company.

For more information, contact James Calore at Star Tech Journal, (609) 662-1080. The FAX number is (609) 662-0537.

■ **Distributor moves....**Birmingham Vending Co. has moved its Orlando, Fla., operations to a new 15,000-square-foot warehouse. The facility is located at 4542 L.B. McLeod Road, Suite A, Orlando, FL 32811. The telephone number is (407) 425-1505 or (800) 330-1233.

■ **Correction....**In a March news feature on Dan Brechner & Co., we listed an incorrect FAX number. It should be (516) 352-1744. We're sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused.

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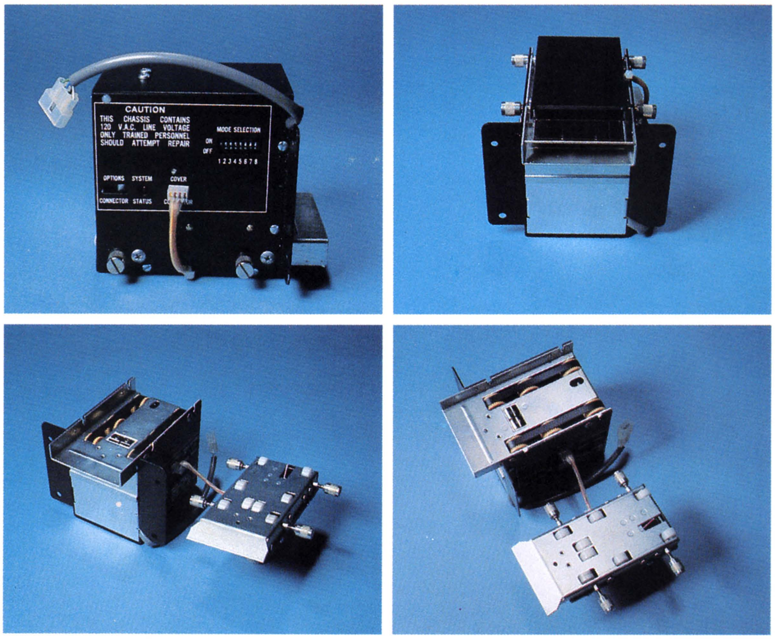
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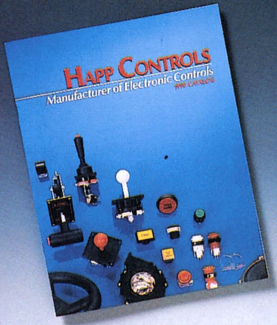

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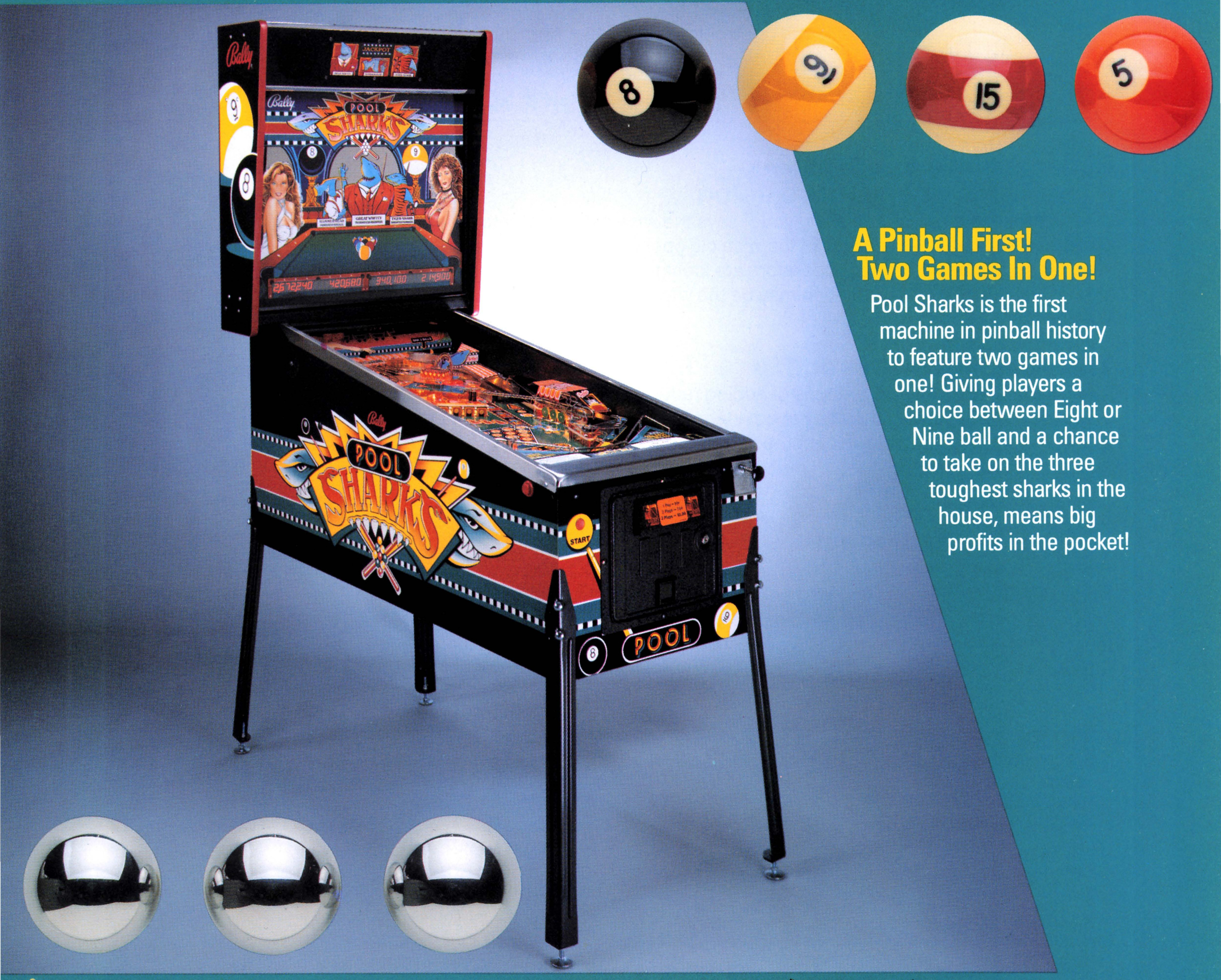

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FEATURES

Redemption a good idea — if you know what you are doing

"Diversity is the answer, I'm telling you," says the wise old operator to his inexperienced colleague. The words of the wise old operator were never more important as video collections plummet. Operators are looking more and more for viable ways to boost their income. Redemption may be the way to go, but look before investing a bundle.

40

Traveling down the road to redemption

After reading about the advantages of adding redemption to your business in the previous article, you may be ready to get started. This go 'round, operator Les Silver tells of his research and careful approach to redemption before jumping in with both feet.

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Looking for fire in a smoke-filled room

The fifth annual ACME is over. It was certainly an exciting three-day event. There were over 50 video games shown, five pinball machines, and a myriad of other types of equipment. Operators seemed particularly interested in redemption. We have put together lots of color photographs along with our coverage of the show for your review.

ACME 1

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COVER

Sega looks to the future and supplies a preview by way of our beautiful and futuristic cover. The new frontiers of technology may be just around the next corner. It's fitting that the company best known for its excellently engineered flight simulators should keep its eye on the future for a progressive amusement industry.

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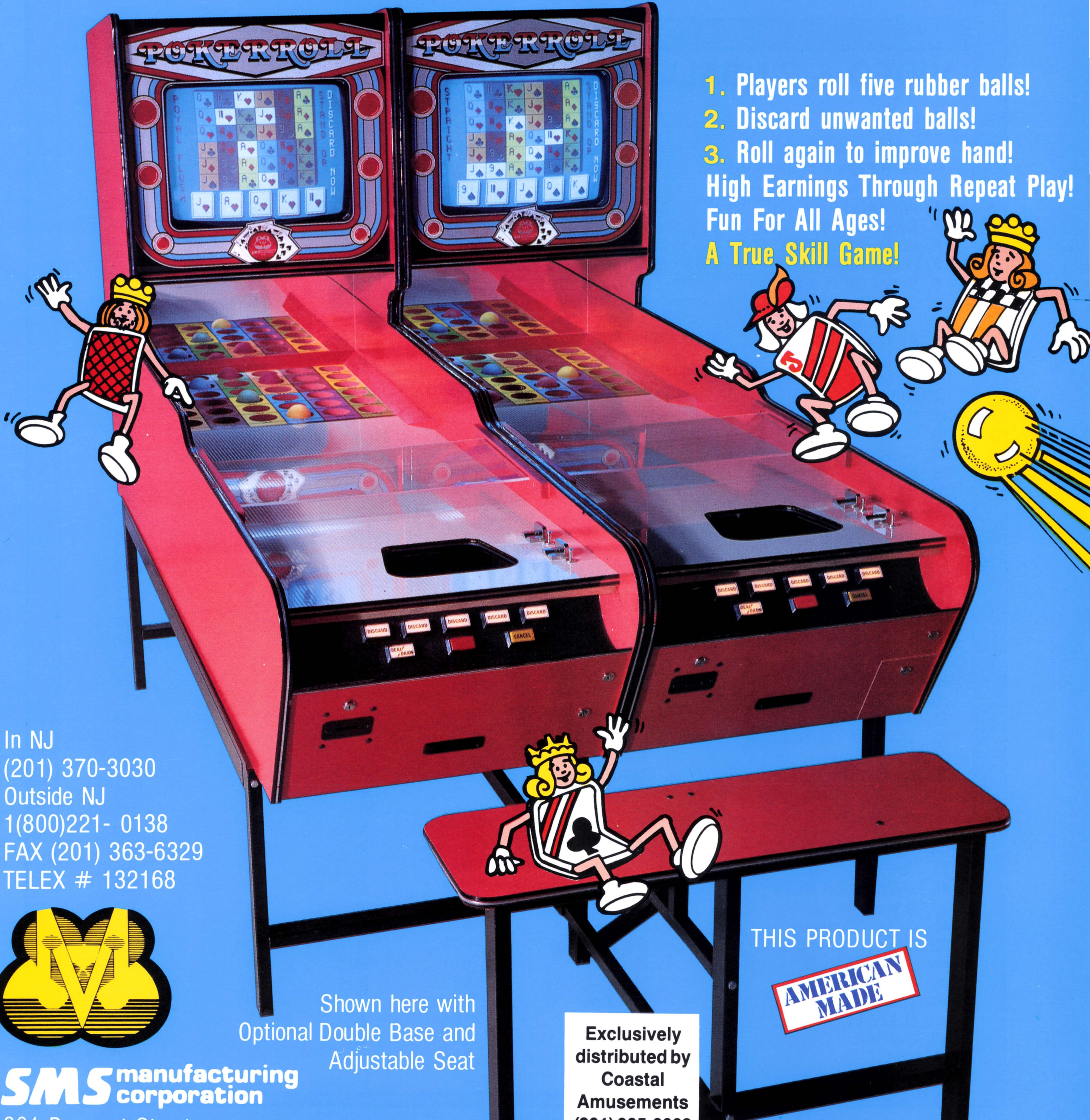
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Buying the right game is a "make-or-break" proposition for the operator, who must have both monthly and ongoing analyses of game performance. This chart is designed to give the operator information he needs to guide his purchases. The "longevity indicator" will tell him how long the game has remained high on the chart. The number of months on the Top 10 is important, as is the total number of months on the chart. Future months will include how long the game was in coin-op before being released for the home market. Look to the chart each month for additional polling information.

VIDEO & PINBALL COMBINED

GAME	MFG.	POINT VALUE	MONTHS ON CHART	MONTHS IN TOP 10	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. TMNT (dedicated)	Konami	9.52	4	4	200
2. Final Fight	Capcom	9.27	2	2	98
3. Hard Drivin'	Atari	9.07	12	12	582
4. Whirlwind	Williams	8.67	2	2	95
5. Cyberball 2027	Atari	8.40	6	5	220
6. WWF Super Stars	American Technos	8.23	9	8	379
7. Police Force	Williams	7.85	6	6	265
8. Super Off Road	Leland	7.82	12	12	558
9. Elvira/Party/Monsters	Bally/Midway	7.79	5	5	214
10. Final Lap	Atari	7.79	11	10	386
11. All American Football	Leland	7.71	5	5	189
12. Earthshaker	Williams	7.69	12	12	549
13. Turbo Out Run	Sega	7.64	12	11	429
14. Golden Axe	Sega	7.59	9	9	383
15. Four Trax	Atari	7.57	2	2	77
16. Out Run	Sega	7.51	12	9	419
17. Badlands	Atari	7.50	2	2	74
18. Monday Night Football	Data East	7.43	6	6	223
19. S.T.U.N. Runner	Atari	7.43	4	4	141
20. Midnight Resistance	Data East	7.40	4	2	82
21. Cyclone	Williams	7.35	12	12	473
22. Buster Bros.	Capcom	7.24	3	1	43
23. Team Quarterback	Leland	7.19	12	6	308
24. Cyberball	Atari	7.15	6	1	116
25. Black Knight 2000	Williams	7.13	9	8	236
26. Taxi	Williams	7.11	12	11	377
27. Operation Thunderbolt	Taito	7.11	12	12	469
28. Toki	Fabtek	7.09	4	4	131
29. Bad Cats	Williams	7.00	4	4	123
30. Lights, Camera, Action!	Premier	7.00	2	2	51
31. Beast Busters	SNK	7.00	2	1	44
32. The Bally Game Show	Bally/Midway	7.00	2	0	29
33. Arch Rivals	Bally/Midway	6.98	9	8	310
34. Chase H.Q.	Taito	6.94	12	8	357
35. U.N. Squadron	Capcom	6.90	4	1	71
36. AfterBurner	Sega	6.88	11	2	178
37. Super Monaco GP	Sega	6.87	3	1	58
38. Tetris	Atari	6.86	8	5	139
39. NARC	Williams	6.85	8	4	198
40. Mechanized Attack	SNK	6.82	8	4	182
41. RoadBlasters	Atari	6.76	10	8	155
42. Crime Fighters	Konami	6.76	9	7	302
43. Mousin' Around	Bally/Midway	6.75	3	2	57
44. Super Hang On	Sega	6.61	10	1	182
45. S.C.I.	Taito	6.53	2	1	25
46. Jokerz	Williams	6.50	12	11	386
47. E.S.W.A.T.	Sega	6.50	4	3	56
48. Cal. 50	Romstar	6.50	3	0	36
49. Klax	Atari	6.50	1	0	2
50. Operation Wolf	Taito	6.49	11	4	226

EQUIPMENT POLL

VIDEO KITS

Game	MFG.	POINT VALUE
1. Final Fight	Capcom	9.27
2. Cyberball 2027	Atari	8.40
3. WWF Super Stars	Am. Technos	8.23
4. All American Football	Leland	7.71
5. Turbo Out Run	Sega	7.64
6. Golden Axe	Sega	7.59
7. Badlands	Atari	7.50
8. Midnight Resistance	Data East	7.40
9. Buster Bros.	Capcom	7.24
10. Toki	Fabtek	7.09
11. Arch Rivals	Bally/Midway	6.98
12. U.N. Squadron	Capcom	6.90
13 Tetris	Atari	6.86
14. RoadBlasters	Atari	6.76
15. Crime Fighters	Konami	6.76
16. E.S.W.A.T.	Sega	6.50
17. Cal. 50	Romstar	6.50
18. Klax	Atari	6.50
19. Tri-Sports	Bally/Midway	6.44
20. Capcom Bowling	Capcom	6.42
21. Championship Sprint	Atari	6.42
22. Cabal	Fabtek	6.40
23. Willow	Capcom	6.27
24. Rambo III	Romstar	6.22
25. Ninja Gaiden	Tecmo	6.17

VIDEO DEDICATED

1. TMNT	Konami	9.52
2. Hard Drivin'	Atari	9.07
3. Super Off Road	Leland	7.82
4. Final Lap	Atari	7.79
5. Four Trax	Atari	7.57
6. Out Run	Sega	7.51
7. S.T.U.N. Runner	Atari	7.43
8. Team Quarterback	Leland	7.19
9. Cyberball	Atari	7.15
10. Operation Thunderbolt	Taito	7.11

PINBALLS

1. Whirlwind	Williams	8.67
2. Police Force	Williams	7.85
3. Elvira/Party Monsters	Bally/Midway	7.79
4. Earthshaker	Williams	7.69
5. Monday Night Football	Data East	7.43
6. Cyclone	Williams	7.35
7. Black Knight 2000	Williams	7.13
8. Taxi	Williams	7.00
9. Bad Cats	Williams	7.00
10. Lights, Camera, Action!	Premier	7.00
11. The Bally Game Show	Bally/Midway	6.75
12. Mousin' Around	Bally/Midway	6.50
13. Jokerz	Williams	6.36
14. Pinbot	Williams	6:36
15. Banzai Run	Williams	6.36

OTHER EQUIPMENT: ELECTRONIC DARTS

1. Arachnid	5.67
2. Valley	5.00
3. Merit	4.75

Reminiscences of Al

What a pleasant surprise seeing Al Rodstein featured in the January Half Century Club Interview. As you know I worked for Al in the Pittsburgh branch of the old Banner operation.

Al has to be one of the most respected men in our industry. He was the type of guy that you went that extra mile for.

I remember a story about Al that rekindles my fond memories of working with him. We were at one of the AMOA shows in Chicago (I think 1982). The last day of the show Al called a 7 a.m. meeting with Al Bruck, Ed Kucharski, Jerry Boyle, Sonny Queck, and me to review and evaluate the equipment. Al, who was and probably still is the master at calculating any known numerical equation instantly, without the use of a calculator, was deciding gross margin percentages.

Now here sits the brain trust of the three Banner offices, hand-held calculators in hand, trying to be the first to calculate a 20 percent (miss those days) margin on a $2,095 game. Being the rookie of the group, brash as I was, I took a stab at throwing a number first. Al leaned back in his chair, took a sip of coffee, and proceeded to tell us that with the new group of junior executives coming up in today's business, he should have invested in Texas Instruments Co.! Everyone broke up, and I sat there looking for a place to hide. Al gave me a fatherly smile and a quick wink, making me feel like one of the gang.

I'll always have a special place in my heart for Al Rodstein. I will remember his great outlook on life and his genuine love for people.

Lou Larson
Atlas Distributors
Pittsburgh, PA

How can I join?

My name is Pat Ferruccio. I would like to know how or what to do to join the Half Century Club. I have been in the business since 1937. I started my own business at 19 here in Canton, Ohio. I am enclosing a copy of my first invoice of Rock-Ola jukeboxes that I bought in 1937. I am still active in the vending business as an operator and distributor. My two sons have also been in the vending business since 1975. I would appreciate any help in this matter.

Pat Ferruccio
P.F. Distributing Co.
Canton, OH

We would be glad to let Pat and anyone else who has 50 years of experience (40 years for associate members) in the coin-op industry know how to join the Half Century Club. Just write or call Steve Kordek, c/o Williams Electronics, 3401 North California Ave., Chicago, IL; (312) 267-2240.

Foosball too good to be missed

I just finished reading your State of the Industry survey and was shocked. How can a magazine supposedly in touch with what is happening in our business report that foosball earnings *dropped* $5 in 1989? To me this is just too hard to swallow. I can't let it pass. I know these surveys are filled out by operators. I also feel that in no way do you alter these figures. However, I'd like to know which teenage mutant turtle shell you found these bozos under.

I feel that I'm in touch with what is happening with foosball across the United States because of my involvement with the Tornado Promotions National Tour. I have operated foosball tables since 1978. I have never owned another piece of equipment—only Tornado foosballs. Sales are increasing, the number of players is increasing, and I still hear the same old line from industry surveys, "Stay away from foosball or you'll lose your shirt."

It's simply not true! My route receipts from the week ending Jan. 21 showed a gross income of over $70 per machine. Bear in mind that most of these machines are 1982 models, and you would be hard pressed to tell the '82s from the '89s, not only in appearance but also in the coin box. I don't know how long these tables will keep giving me this type of return, but I can't see any decline. Another fact I would like to mention is that I bought all of the '82s and '83s used, and I haven't bought a kit or replaced a power board yet.

My monthly maintenance cost is about $7 per table, and I keep all of my tables in like-new condition. Many were used in the 1986 World Championships right off my route. And while I'm on tournaments, let me clear up the myth that you *must* promote foosball before they will make money—not true. My best per-table income location has never had a tournament and probably never will. I use tournaments to build up locations' income, not to maintain them.

There's something else I don't understand. In this same issue you listed the major distributors, 23 of which are Tornado dealers, yet only four said they carried Tornado products. I don't fault Play Meter for this, but when I called (anonymously) to find out why, many told me they did not carry this line but would sell me a Taiwan import for the same or slightly less money. What I don't understand is why these distributors operate Tornado tables on their own routes but sell their customers the other brands.

I feel that if operators tried foosballs on their routes, they would be pleasantly surprised to find out what they can do. It's true that these tables do require more than just counting money, but maintenance is simple, and if you don't mind earning your money they are excellent investments. I challenge any operator to look at his route and find a piece of equipment he's had since '82 (bought used) that earns over $70 week-in and week-out.

Another quick point. All of my tables have been on 50-cent play since I've owned them. Many locations have gone to 75-cent play without problems.

If you choose to run this, I hope that you would also list my phone number, so if any operators wish to find out more they could call. I feel that foosball has a prominent place in our industry despite industry surveys and distributor neglect. ☐

Dave Courington
Tornado of Houston
Houston, TX
(713) 920-2643

Wants to help

I have a voice that has been silent for too long in this industry. Years ago, I wrote numerous letters to Ralph Lally, which he published, and we talked about the possibility of my writing on a semi-regular basis.

Things happen and the years pass. However, I still have a lot of common sense information which would be easily understandable and useful for the average operator. My experience and knowledge on a wide range of topics could be of value and right at home in Play Meter.

Jack Guarnieri
Jackson, N.J.

Thanks, Jack, for the letter. We have printed your "Things an operator never hears from his locations" elsewhere in this issue. I welcome any articles that would be of help to our readers. ☐

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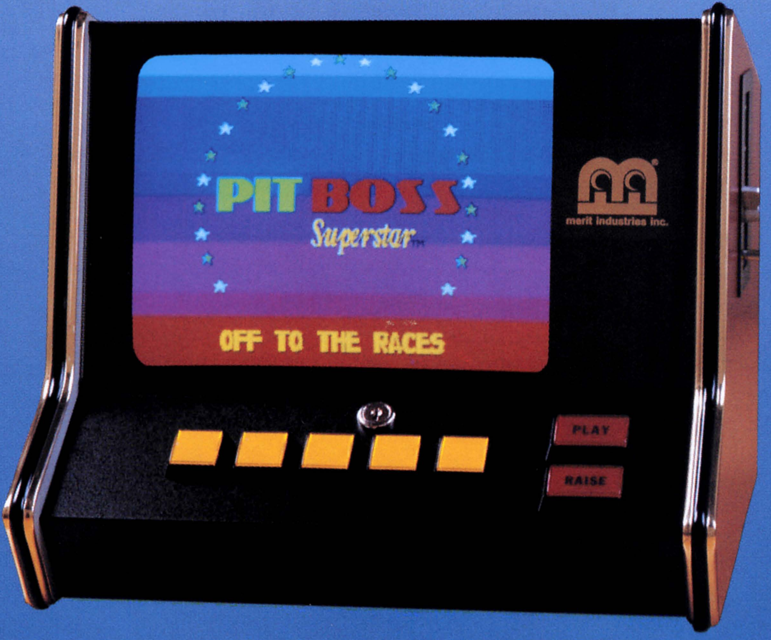

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FROM THE EDITOR

Looking for a happy ending

Maybe I'm a little old-fashioned, or maybe I'm too stressed out with daily tasks, but when I take time out from my hectic schedule to watch a movie or play a game, I'm not looking for depressing reality.

Sure, I want something that is entertaining, but I don't like to spend time watching movies that make me feel worse than I did before.

Remember watching the old classics that just sucked the tears right from your eyes? Like Bette Davis in the movie "Dark Victory." I'm sure there wasn't a dry eye in the movie theater for that one. My husband calls them tear-jerkers.

Even the TV sitcoms made you feel good. I know that no family I grew up with had Donna Stone or Margaret Anderson for a mother. Our parents screamed when we screwed up and let us have it when we tracked mud all over the clean floors. That was reality! But it was such fun to watch the perfect families solve their problems the perfect way.

Our old movies and TV shows helped nurture us through life. Even if we knew that our mothers were not like Margaret Anderson, what the heck, we also were very aware that we weren't like her kids! I didn't hug my brother and walk around trying to be as helpful as I could be. No, I knew it was my place in life to make my parents suffer! But nonetheless, maybe I was a little nicer to my kid brother after watching the show.

I am not a prudish person, but I will admit that some of the movies that my kids are watching shock me. Gone are the days when Gary Grant and Grace Kelly embrace and kiss while the camera pans to the ocean lapping at the shore. We could *imagine* what they were going to do next, but we were not invited to watch every detail. Today, we are right there looking up nostrils and seeing lots of skin. I liked imagining what was going on much better.

We also conjured up some pretty gruesome thoughts when we saw a hand raising up with a knife in it. Someone was going to get it, but again, we were spared the gory particulars. Movies today specialize in gore. If a hand is drawing back to do the dirty deed, you can believe that we will be given the full shock treatment, body parts flying and blood splattering everywhere.

I think kids today have grown so accustomed to violence and racy films that it has spread over into other areas of their lives. They just aren't shocked at things anymore. That's sad. They play games with violent themes and don't think twice about blowing someone's head off, or seeing blood pouring out of a hapless victim. These themes have become a part of their lives.

However, in walking around and absorbing the games at ACME, I was keenly aware that there are many more games with cute themes. That left me with a pretty good feeling. It is nice to know that there are games that don't feature blood and guts that can still be popular. When *Pac-Man* was introduced, he wasn't taken too seriously amid the shoot 'em ups of the time. After all, how popular could a cute, furry, fluffball gobbling up energy dots really be? I don't think I need even answer that. ☐

Valerie Cognevich

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

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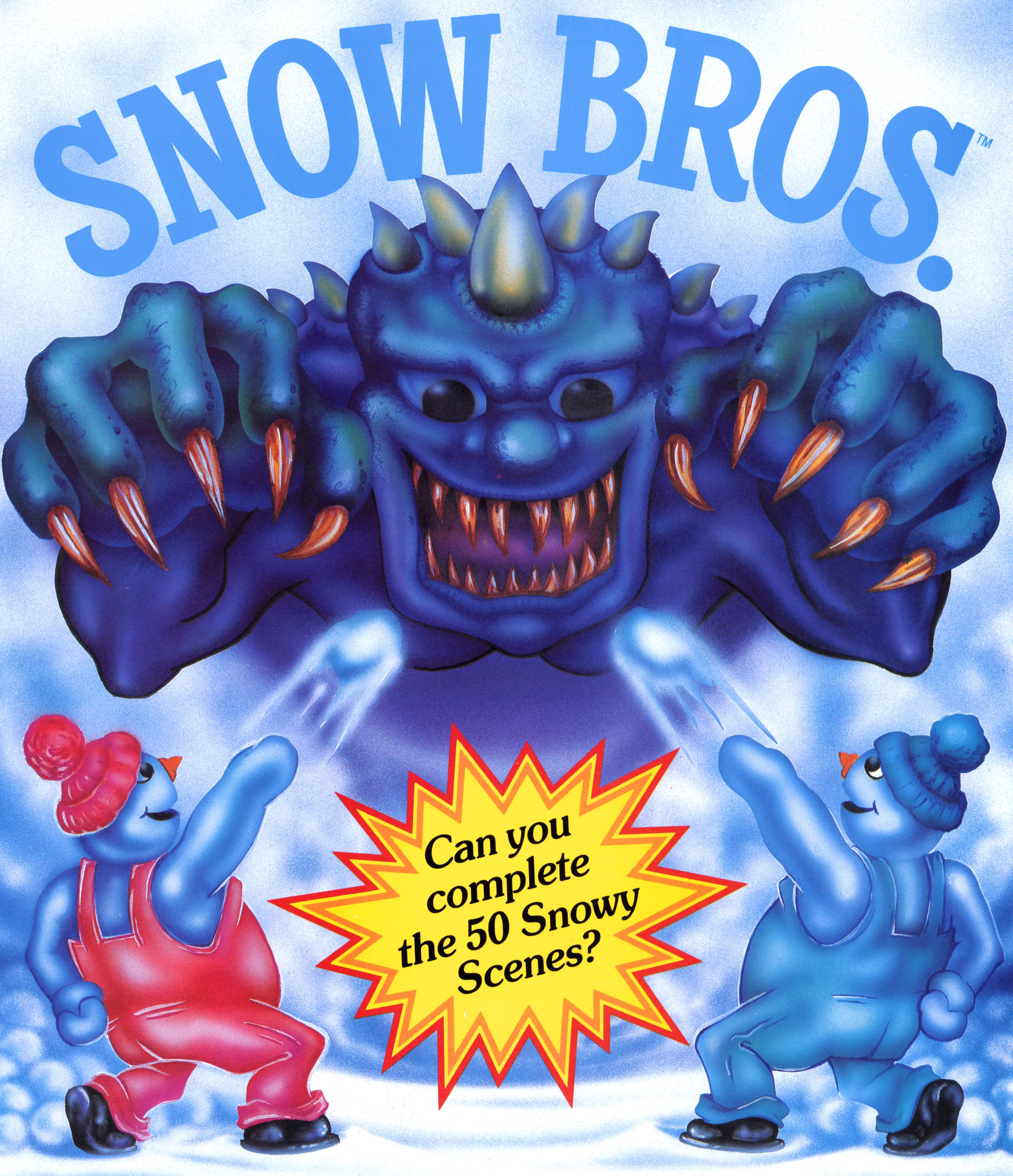
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UP FRONT

Scout mottos not just for little boys

Everyone knows the Boy Scout motto: *Be prepared.* But what about the Cub Scout motto, the one for those younger boys from second grade through fifth grade? It's simple and direct: *Do your best.* I know this motto well since I am a Cub Scout den leader for the second time in four years. By the end of my second-go-round tenure I'll have earned the Endurance Badge. Both of my sons will be able to claim me as a fearless leader their first year of scouting.

I probably should have my head examined, committing to weekly meetings of eight seven- and eight-year-old boys at my home. Meetings are after school on Fridays. (It goes without saying that's our ''take out'' night.) Knowing the mayhem about to happen, the three family cats scatter when the boys arrive. The gregarious family dog joins in the activities and has developed a particular taste for leftover punch and cupcakes.

To characterize the meetings as hectic would be a gross understatement. Crafting sailboats, constructing bird houses, and painting totem poles are not part of my job description either as a journalist or homemaker. But when the members of Den 6, Pack 100 invade my home I become a creative handyman, disciplinarian (I wear a whistle to help restore order), and information source for the endlessly inquisitive.

Like the older scouts, I must always be prepared. Young boys can never sit still. As soon as they complete one part of a project they are ready to grab a soccer ball and dash outdoors. Every minute of the meeting has to be planned out.

In any endeavor, there's no substitute for doing the best job possible and being prepared. The coin-op amusement business is no exception. Especially now, during a decided downturn in video revenues, I hope operators will persevere. Buying wisely, diversifying, getting creative about promotions, and providing the kind of service that makes the location feel special all help. Joining state and national associations puts you in touch with others who can share your present-day concerns and dreams of the future.

Trade shows, like the spring ACME and fall AMOA, are valuable not only for obtaining new product information firsthand, but also for the long list of seminars that give practical, everyday advice adaptable to your own business environment. The emphasis on business and technical sessions in the ACME '90 seminar schedule is a direct result of input from operators.

Such shows provide good return on investment, buzz words in our industry. Nowhere else can the product, the people, and the problems come together in a few short days. Operators from such diverse markets as Watertown, N.Y., Sanford, N.C., Winona, Minn., Gulf Shores, Ala., and Temple City, Calif., have an opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences, all the while reviewing game play and observing trends in equipment.

As a co-sponsor of ACME, Play Meter extends thanks to all the attendees and exhibitors who helped make the show a success again this year. Its purpose will be accomplished if it becomes a major contributor to each attendee's desire to be prepared and do his best. ☐

Bonnie Theard

Bonnie Theard
Managing Editor

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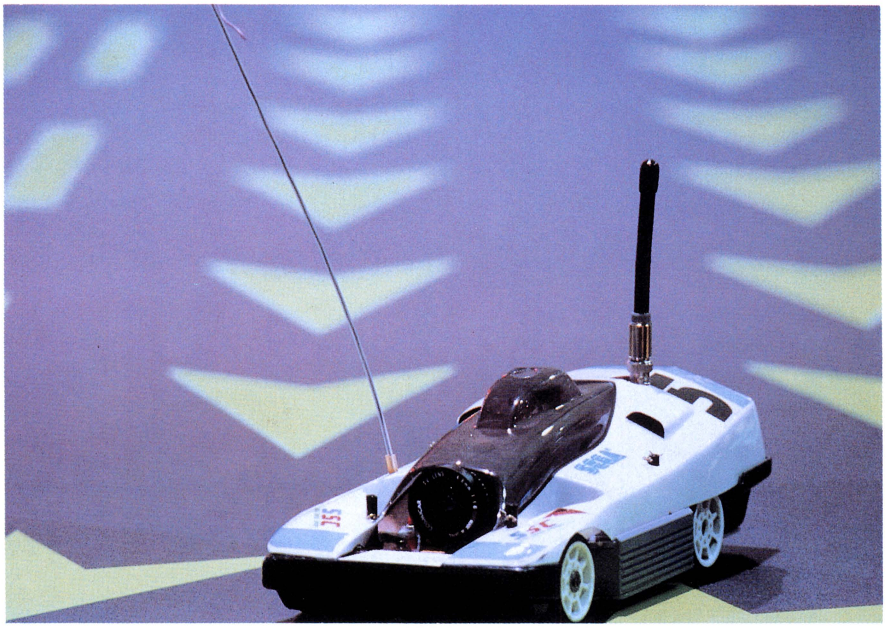
Sega: A true success story

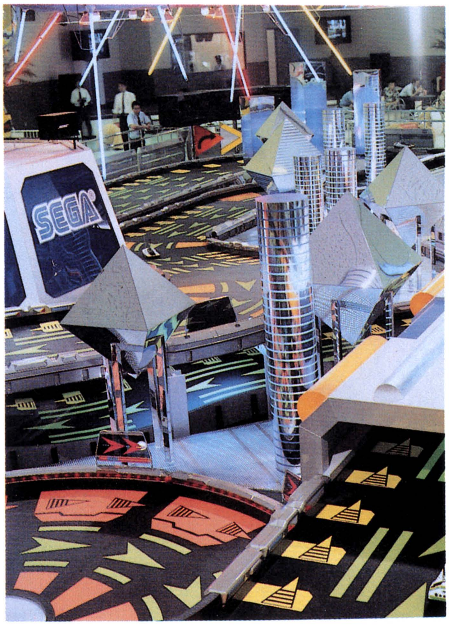
The players (above) in race car simulators are controlling cars (as shown below) on this realistic race track (right).

Sega Enterprises' origin began over 30 years ago in Japan. A young man named David Rosen, through his company Rosen Enterprises, began exposing the Asian and Japanese market to American amusement games by importing used amusement games into Japan.

Another company, Service Games, had the same idea as Rosen; soon the two were competitors. Sensing that they could combine their efforts and be successful, the two companies merged. Taking the first two letters from Service and the first two from Games, Sega was born.

Instead of relying solely on the United States for product, Sega assembled an impressive team of designers. Soon Sega was developing games that found a following not only in Japan but in the United States as well.





In 1969 the company went public and was sold to Gulf + Western. Sega U.S.A. was opened in San Diego, and in 1975 it merged with Gremlin Industries. It could safely be said that Sega was always a company ahead of its time. It was the first to tantalize the coin-op industry with a laser game. Though months from production, *Astron Belt* was shown at AMOA '82. The industry went crazy. Wanting to jump ahead of the competition, which was sure to introduce its own laser games, Bally made an offer to buy Sega—chiefly for the rights to *Astron Belt*.

Also in 1982, Sega's David Rosen shocked the industry when he predicted that it wouldn't be long before over 60 percent of games sold would be conversion kits. Things were peaking in the coin-op industry at the time, and very few shared his vision.

Sega returned to the United States with a bang in 1985 with *Hang On*. President Tom Petit says of the game, ''When I went to Japan to see *Hang On*, one look was all I needed to know that it was what the industry needed. It had attraction, value, and a hardware system that produced outstanding graphics. It was clearly unique.''

The coin-op industry was in the thick of a depression at the time. ''It started the video game business back again,'' noted Howell Ivy, Sega's vice president.

Sega's philosophy was to polish up the organization and concentrate on developing technology that would propel Sega forward in an aggressive manner. The vehicle they used to accomplish their goals was high end simulation technology. The feeling was that it would be the catalyst to bring players back into locations.

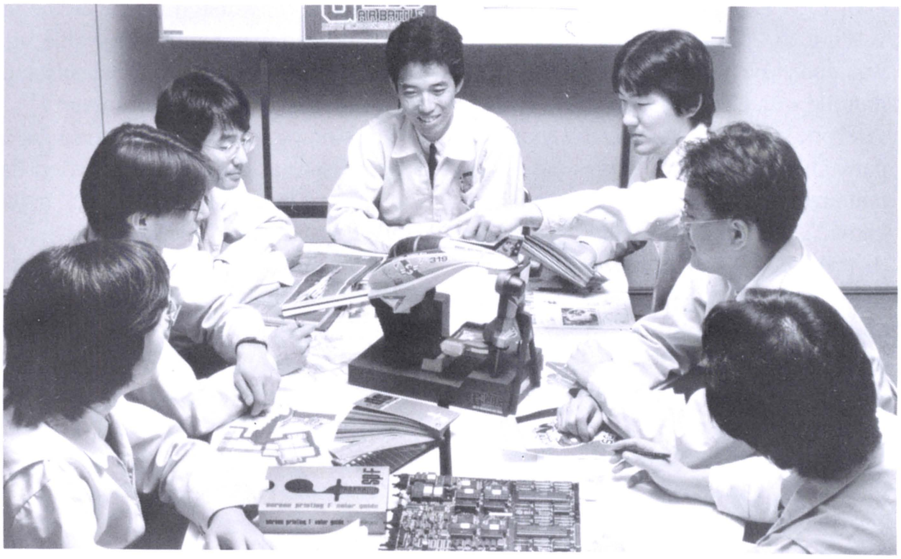
''Sega is now developing four new hardware systems.''

The philosophy had worked with *Hang On*. But the company knew that one game would not be enough. Sega followed its tremendous hit with *Enduro Racer*, then *Out Run*. Operators bought and players played.

Sega had accomplished its goal of providing players an environment of advanced technology in a unique, realistic manner, whether featuring a motorcycle, spaceship, or race car. ''Our effort was to plug the player into a real world environment,'' said Petit.

But realistically, Sega knew that the high-end simulators would not adapt themselves to street-type locations. So it introduced upright versions to meet those needs. In addition, Sega also began to develop high-quality kits. ''We knew that the kit business was a viable, necessary business and wanted to access that market. We were very fortunate that because of the success of our dedicated games, we were in a position to be very selective about the

Sega Japan headquarters.



Sega Japan's R&D team.

kits we brought to the market,'' said Petit.

Sega's kits have traditionally been well-received. *Choplifter* was followed two years later with *Shinobi* and *Altered Beast.* One of last year's conversion kits, *Golden Axe*, earned Sega a Play Meter Award, voted by operators as the company that has excelled in kit manufacturing.

Although Sega has been a major player in the home game market, Petit says, ''We are dedicated to the coin-op market. You must remember that we are one of the largest amusement operators in the world. We have a tremendous investment to protect and maintain. As a result, we must spend a significant amount of money on our coin-op R&D efforts in the ongoing pursuit to bring to the market creative new products. Just look at Sega's products. They have all the qualities needed to help operators make a fair return on investment.''

Ivy added, ''We have over 400 engineers in Japan working on coin-op game development. In addition, we have established an R&D group here in the United States to develop games for this market. Being in the actual environment will help our designers develop games to suit the market.''

Not stopping to rest on past successes, Sega is now developing four new hardware systems. Two are lower end technologies that basically will be used in marketing conversion kits and economical dedicated games. The other two systems will be more advanced for more sophisticated application.

''The gap between home games and coin-op games is closing. But our new systems and technology will take us far ahead of anything players will be able to find in their homes,'' stressed Petit.

He continued, ''Manufacturers will have to evolve and give the player more dynamic and sensational experiences at the coin-op level. To accomplish this, we are simply going to bring new tools to the business, enabling us to create products that address those needs. I can assure you that we are doing exactly that.''

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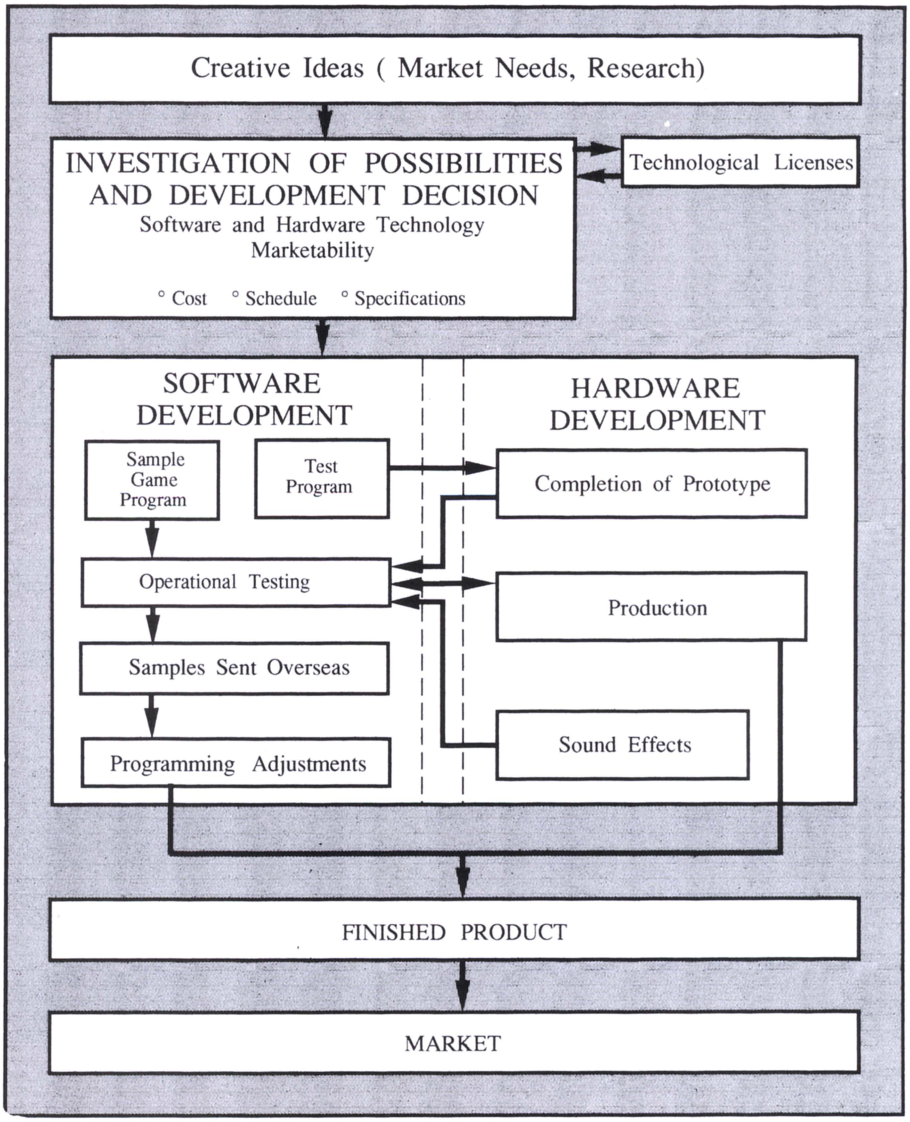
R&D Flow Chart


Creative Ideas (Market Needs, Research)
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Completion of Prototype
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Is your congressman a whiz at coin-op?

The answer to the above question will be determined on May 1, the date for the 1990 AMOA/AAMA Congressional Pinball, Coin-Op Basketball, and Electronic Dart Tournament. It will be held at the Longworth House Office Building cafeteria in Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the AMOA/AAMA Congressional Reception. All of these activities will be staged during the 1990 Government Affairs Conference, April 29-May 1.

Last year, more than 600 congressmen, their immediate families, staffers, and legislative aides from over 150 congressional offices participated in the pinball and coin-op basketball tournament. This year, it's been expanded to include electronic darts. The theme for the tournament is "Winners Don't Use Drugs."

The tournament's top winners will have over $15,000 in prize money donated to each participating congressman's favorite charity, on behalf of AMOA/AAMA. The congressmen will also receive a stuffed plush elephant or donkey from crane games on display at the tournament/reception.

Tournament invitations are currently being distributed by AMOA's Chicago office. AMOA/AAMA members are also being encouraged to personally deliver an invitation to their congressmen at the state and local level.

AMOA/AAMA will also hold a "Carnival for Life" benefit for D.C.-area anti-drug groups on April 30. Among those invited to the event are representatives from the executive branch and other Washington VIPs.

For more information on the conference and/or tournament—including housing, registration forms, and tournament invitations—contact AMOA's Chicago headquarters at 111 E. Wacker Drive, Suite 600, Chicago, IL 60601; (312) 565-4602.

Kramer acquired

Zober Industries of Croydon, Pa., has acquired Kramer Mfg. Inc., a transaction that will afford Kramer capabilities it never had before, according to Phil Cornick, vice president of operations.

"Although Kramer will be a division of Zober Industries, our operations will remain independent," he said. "Our new capabilities include in-house metal fabrication, substantially increased engineering, high-volume P.C. board assembly, and significantly increased inventory."

Cornick added that Kramer will continue manufacturing—and servicing—the coin-op products it made before the acquisition. A couple of new games are in the design stage.

For sales assistance, contact Phil Horowitz, Kramer's national sales manager, at (800) 872-4094, or the customer service department at (800) 631-2126. The new address is Kramer Mfg. Inc., 451 Magnolia Ave., Croydon, PA 19020; (215) 788-8516 or (215) 788-8953.

UATA removes all parallels

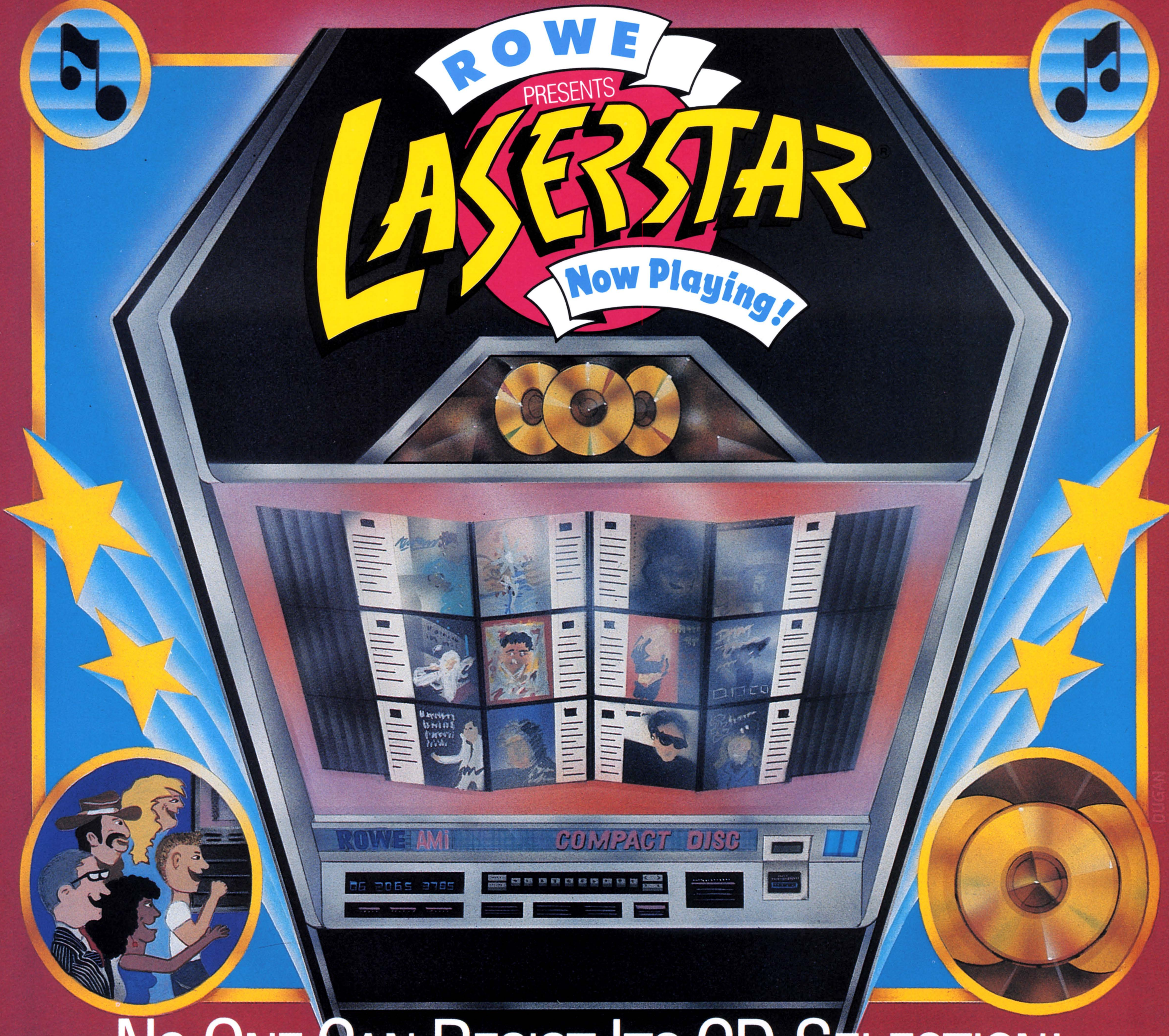
Taito America Corp. and United Artists Theatre Amusements (UATA), a large California operating company, have amicably resolved their differences over the use of genuine Taito parallel boards. The matter was settled out of court.

Negotiations between Pete O'Neill, Taito's director of intellectual security, and UATA president Jon Daugherty led to the settlement. When the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the petition of Red Baron, thereby upholding an appeals court decision in favor of Taito, UATA agreed to immediately remove all Taito parallel boards from its routes.

Any operators who have questions about removing parallel boards from their routes can contact O'Neill at Taito America Corp., 390 Holbrook Drive, Wheeling, IL 60090; (708) 520-9280.

Theatre Amusements

Taito's Pete O'Neill (l) with UATA president Jon Daugherty.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Faris returns as pinball artist

Paul Faris, director of art at Bally during the early '80s, has completed artwork for his first pinball machine in five years: Data East's new *Phantom of the Opera*. In addition to his work for Bally, Faris did the art on such modern pinball classics as *Lost World, Paragon, Xenon, Space Invaders*, and *Centaur*.

His return with *Phantom of the Opera* introduces a new backglass screening technique that allows a shielded image to appear and disappear before the player's eyes.

Paul Faris

Griffiths named to new Valley post

Valley Recreation Products Inc. has appointed James E. Griffiths vice president of international operations, according to president Chuck Milhem. Griffiths was previously the director of the company, with responsibilities in the international marketplace.

"James has been very instrumental in the progress and rapid expansion of all our business interests overseas," Milhem said. "His responsibility will remain that of furthering our interests in the global marketplace for not only our existing product lines, but also to extend our interest to other products and services that may lend themselves to our overseas interests."

Before coming to Valley, Griffiths worked in Brunswick's bowling division for 23 years. He served in the United States, Far East, Middle East, Europe, and Africa as vice president of international marketing.

The first in a series of weekend seminar groups with Frank "The Crank" Seninsky of Alpha-Omega Amusements took place at Brady Distributing in Charlotte, N.C., on Jan. 20-21. His seminars are for company owners or top-level managers, while groups of advancing technicians are taught by Star Tech Journal. Among those attending in Charlotte were, seated (l to r): Mike Wood, William Thevaos, Brady's Tom Kiel, James Watkins, and Shaffer Johnston; standing (l to r): Joe DeFravio, Brady president Jon Brady, and Woodrow W. Smith.

Planning underway for AMOA Expo '90

Information has been mailed out to prospective exhibitors for AMOA Expo '90, to be held in New Orleans on Oct. 25-27. More than 650 booths are expected to be sold for the show, which features the latest in video, pinball, CD jukeboxes, electronic darts, pool tables, cranes, cigarette vending, and other coin-op equipment/technologies.

In addition to the exhibits, educational seminars at Expo '90 will address a host of technical and management issues. Attendee registration, housing, and program information will be mailed to the industry later this spring.

Police continue board crackdown

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police in the province of Ontario is continuing its assault on copy boards being illegally operated. According to Bill Kidwell, the director of investigations for AAMA, the most recent example is the successful conviction of Ronald Cecil Garton Nutt of Nutt's Amusements.

Nutt pled guilty to a criminal charge of possession of 11 counterfeit printed circuit boards; he was assessed a fine of $1,500.

Also, AAMA investigators have assisted the RCMP in three other investigations, resulting in the seizure of 72 copy boards from one operator and 26 from another. Criminal charges are pending against both operators; the third investigation is progressing, with seizures expected, Kidwell said.

Most of the games seized have been older ones, but they are still in violation of Canadian copyright law. In recent investigations, Kidwell said, they are finding more new and legitimate games than have been seen in the past. He believes this is an indication that the work being done by the RCMP is having an effect on the use of copied boards. Since the new Canadian copyright laws were enacted in June 1988, the RCMP has been aggressive in the enforcement of intellectual property rights, Kidwell added.

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Tornado's 1990 tour underway

The dates and places have been set for Tornado Table Soccer's 1990 tournament tour. Things got rolling at the $25,000 tournament kick-off in Houston on Feb. 16-18.

The remaining schedule is as follows: April 13-15: $20,000 West Coast Open in San Bernardino, Calif.; May 25-28: $30,000 Masters Open in Atlanta; July 6-8: U.S. Open in Denver; Aug. 31-Sept. 3: $60,000 World Championships in Dallas/Ft. Worth; and Nov. 22-26: $30,000 National Championships in Tampa.

For more information, contact Dave Courington, Tornado Promotions, P.O. Box 1674, Pasadena, Texas 77501; (713) 920-2643.

Mars service center opens in Florida

Mars Electronics International Inc. has added Miami Vending Electronics to its network of authorized service centers, according to Bill Millette, Mars Electronics' customer relations manager. Miami Vending will service the complete line of Mars Electronics coin changers and bill acceptors, primarily serving the south Florida and Caribbean markets.

''Miami Vending is our 'service partner' in these important, growth-oriented markets,'' Millette said. ''We are confident that their technical expertise and industry presence throughout the Caribbean will be beneficial in the decade ahead.''

The Miami facility becomes the 31st factory-authorized service center in the United States and Canada. It is the seventh center opened in the past two years. Miami Vending Electronics is located at 350 N. Seaboard Road; Frank Dichazi is the service manager.

For more information, contact Mars Electronics International Inc., Customer Service Dept., 1301 Wilson Drive, West Chester, PA 19380; (800) 345-8215 or (215) 430-2500.

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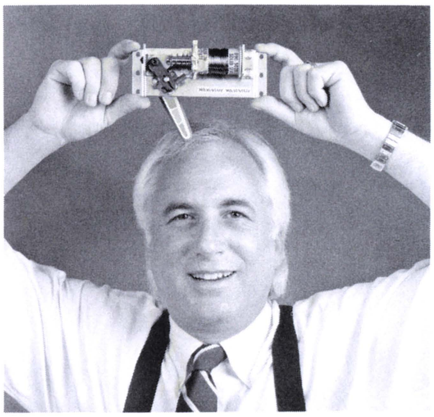
Mars Electronics International representatives welcome staff members from Miami Vending Electronics, which was recently named an authorized service center for Mars' products.



Gary Stern

New flipper gets favorable reviews

Gary Stern, executive vice president and general manager for Data East Pinball, reports good operator feedback regarding the company's new flipper. ''We have built our entire run of *Robocop* pinballs with the patented solid-state flipper,'' he said. ''Operators say it works virtually flawlessly and reduces service calls.''

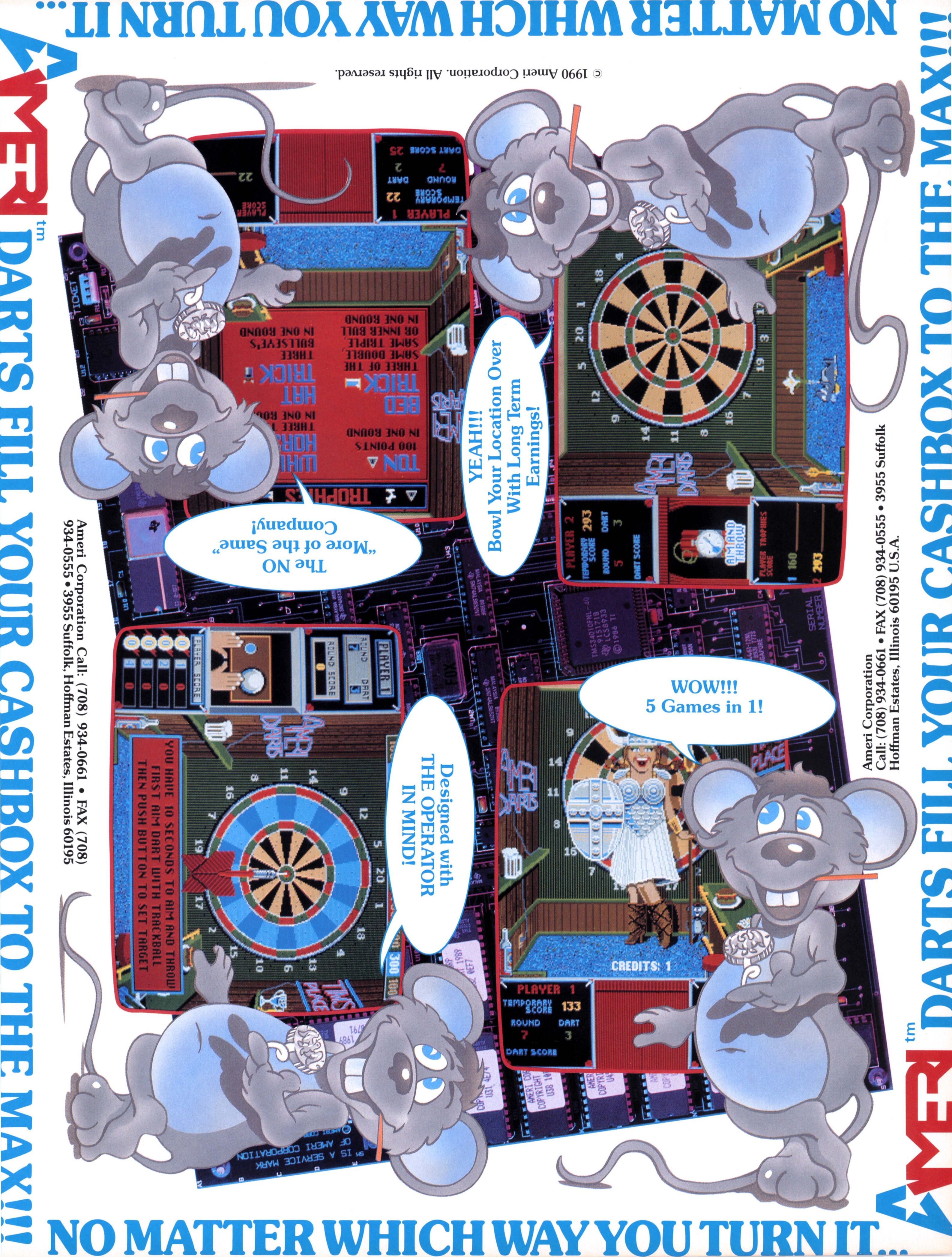
The U.S. Patent Office has issued a patent covering the solid-state flipper.

Also, with *Phantom of the Opera*, Data East Pinball is changing the cabinet flipper button switch to a microswitch. ''Only with a solid-state flipper can gold microswitches be used, again improving reliability,'' Stern said. ''On *Phantom of the Opera*, I continue to guarantee that no flipper coil will burn out for one year, or I will give operators a replacement coil for free.

''We had virtually no problems with *Robocop*, and the solid-state flipper will work great on *Phantom of the Opera*, too. We will continue to improve our games for better reliability.''

Correction

In our February issue, we incorrectly listed the telephone number for R.H. Belam Co. Inc. They can be reached at their Long Island headquarters, Nassau Plaza, One Fulton Avenue, Hempstead, NY 11550; (516) 292-2670; FAX (516) 486-0957. ☐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2 293
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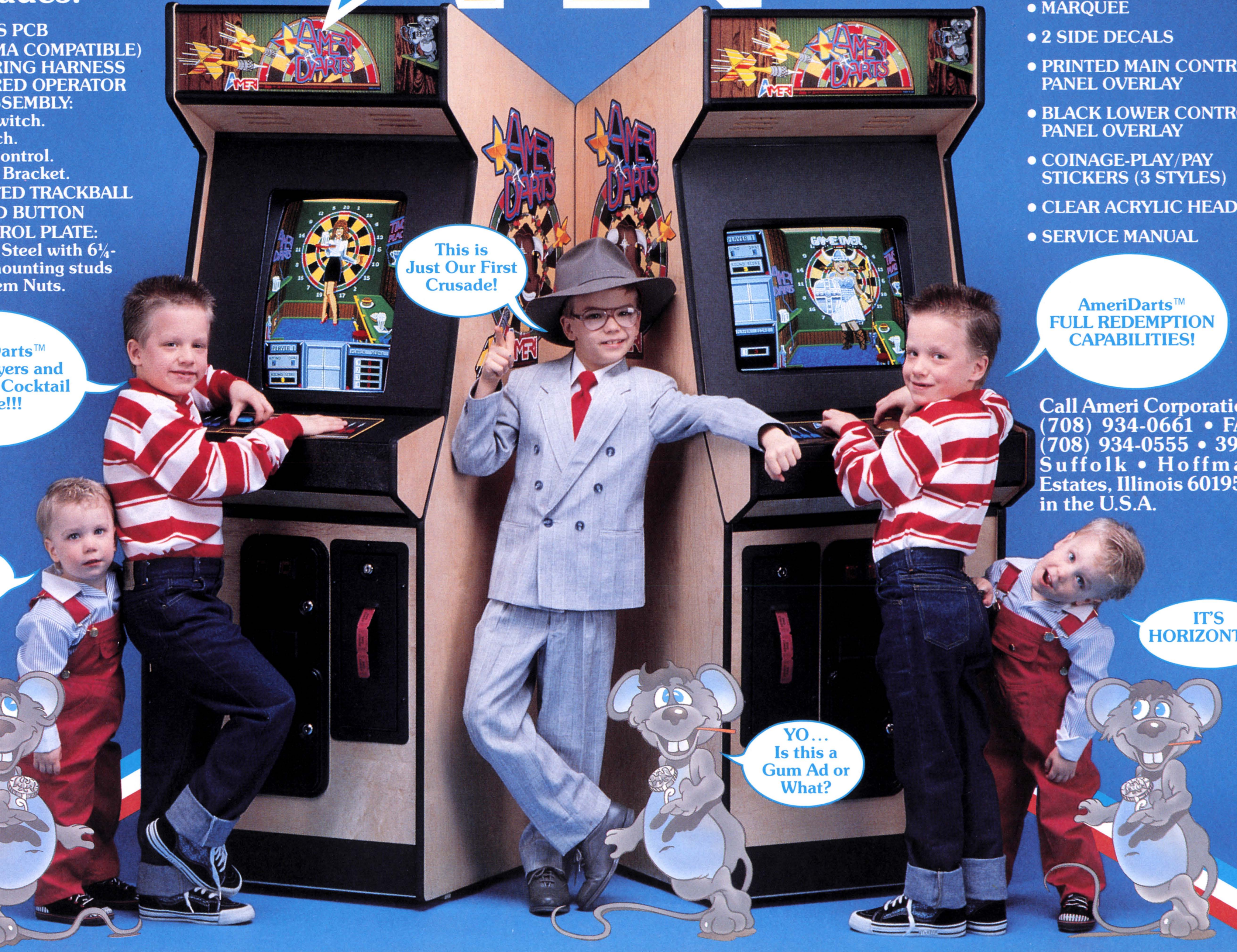
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STATE UPDATE

Florida

The Florida Amusement-Vending Association (FAVA) is ushering in the new decade with its annual Music and Games Convention and Tradeshow, April 19-21 at the Omni Expo Center in Orlando. The show theme is ''Positioned for the '90s.''

Manufacturers from across the country will be on hand to exhibit their latest equipment. There were over 100 booths sold for last year's event. FAVA's Kathey Fanning expects as good a turnout this year, if not better.

In addition to the exhibits, there will be valuable technical seminars conducted by manufacturers' service representatives. This year, the seminars will focus on correcting problems that flare up in pinballs and CD jukeboxes.

A golf tournament is scheduled at one of the area's premier courses on April 19. A host of special activities are planned for spouses on the following day.

The exhibit floor hours are 1 to 7 p.m. on April 20, 12 to 7 p.m. on April 21. The technical seminars will take place in the morning on both days.

For more information, contact Kathey Fanning, Association Manager, c/o FAVA, P.O. Box 13089, Tallahassee, FL 32317-3089; (904) 878-3134.

New York

AMOA-NY will stage its second annual golf tournament on April 23 at the Bonnie Briar Country Club in Larchmont, N.Y. Named the ''Nat Ury Memorial Golf Outing,'' it is dedicated to the memory of the former AMOA-NY president and long-time operator. Ury initiated the first event in 1989 as a way to raise money to combat anti-amusement game legislation.

Included in the $200 registration fee is an 11 a.m. brunch, greens fees and carts, lockers, registration, prime rib dinner, and prizes. For more information, contact Chairman Frank Calland, E & S Music Corp. at (516) 665-0690, or AMOA-NY executive director Curtiss Matterson at (518) 439-0981.

Oregon

Gov. Neil Goldschmidt and state legislative leaders are trying to devise a way to offset the substantial amount of projected revenue lost when the Oregon Lottery ditched plans to run video pokers.

Money raised through video poker machines would have gone to mass transit programs and increasing salaries for faculty at public colleges and universities. The Oregon Lottery abandoned the plan after recent opposition from several counties. Goldschmidt said that although he supported the decision to abandon video poker, the state still must raise faculty salaries. He is seeking a revenue source to fund $50 million for this purpose.

Meanwhile, the governor *has* found a way to fund the Oregon Youth Conservation Corps: on the backs of operators via a doubling of license fees. As we reported in the March ''News Bulletin,'' it now costs operators $100 per video game and pinball machine—up from $50. The tax on jukeboxes and kiddie rides rose from $25 to $50.

A group of operators are in the midst of a letter-writing campaign to legislators, which they hope will lead to special legislation restoring the fees to their previous levels. Eric Mahaffy of Easily Amused in Springfield, Ore., who's spearheading the effort, says if operators stay focused and are successful in having the increase reversed, future legislative sessions may see a further whittling of fees.

Oregon operators interested in helping can contact Eric Mahaffy, 3136 Partridge Way, Springfield, OR 97477; (503) 726-6858.

Pennsylvania

In August 1989, the board of directors for the Pennsylvania Amusement and Music Machine Association (PAMMA) established a committee to push for the legalization of gambling on video poker machines. Now, a bill that was drafted in mid-January looks to have the best chance ever of passing in the Legislature.

State Rep. Fred Trello, chairman of the House Finance Committee, introduced the bill—along with 48 co-sponsors. According to PAMMA president Fred Wood, this is more than double the number of sponsors for any video poker legislation previously introduced. It has been designated as H.B. 2300 and referred to Trello's committee. The committee is expected to meet no later than mid-April.

Of course, this will be an expensive fight. Namely, $50,000 has to be raised for the PAMMA political action committee. Wood urges operators to send *personal* checks for $250 or more to PAMMA PAC (state law prohibits corporate checks).

For more information, call the PAMMA office at (800) 521-7778.

Wisconsin

On Feb. 5, Wisconsin Attorney General Donald Hanaway issued a formal opinion that said video poker games are illegal everywhere in the state, along with casino-type gambling. The ruling caught some by surprise, who felt that video pokers might be declared legal under present lottery statutes.

However, Hanaway said, the Legislature could legalize video pokers by rescinding parts of the lottery statute. They can take such action and make it applicable to the entire state, or only to Indian reservations. No constitutional amendment would be required, Hanaway added.

On the other hand, Gov. Tommy Thompson apparently would not be in the corner of pro-video poker forces. Thompson said that Hanaway's opinion was the ''narrow interpretation'' he (Thompson) had favored. Further, Thompson conceded that he is opposed to casino-type gambling. Whether he feels the same about video poker machines is unclear.

WAMO has been pushing for passage of video poker legislation for over a year. Despite this ruling, the association will continue to follow a strategy that calls for enactment of Senate Bill 299. ☐

Ameri: The ''no more of the same'' company

The name Ameri Corporation may be new to coin-op, but the four men who started the company certainly are not. Frank and Joe Bundra and Ron and Dave Siller have brought many years of experience to Ameri, a company they started just over a year ago. Frank and Joe are in charge of marketing and Dave and Ron are in charge of technical and creative development.

Dave and Ron Siller started out as street operators and arcade owners in 1977. Both worked their way up through sales and service to the manufacturing level. Ironically, both began in manufacturing at Nichibutsu. Dave moved on to Tecmo, while Ron sought out the cutting edge of electronic technology outside of the coin-op industry. They concur that working as operators has helped them understand what the operator needs.

Joe Bundra started in the industry in 1981 at Interlogic, one of the premier kit companies in the industry. Although he started in the warehouse, he worked his way up after learning the industry from the ground up. When Konami bought Interlogic, he stayed on and was promoted to operations manager and head of purchasing.

Frank's coin-op career began in 1981 in sales at Interlogic. It wasn't long before he was promoted to national sales manager and finally vice president. He also stayed after Konami's acquisition and remained as a vice president.

Ameri's strategy is simple: expand the player base; don't just try to pull more quarters from the same pockets. Frank said, ''Much of our industry seems to try to keep aiming their product at the same small segment of the pie. We want to shoot at the majority of the pie. We would prefer $2 from 100 people rather than $10 from 20 people. It lends itself to a stronger base to build on as well as to tap into.''

Frank Bundra at the ATE show in London with *AmeriDarts*.

Ameri's goal is quality, not quantity. They intend to introduce from three to four quality games a year. They are adamant about not introducing a game until it is ready. The first game, *AmeriDarts*, was introduced at AMOA '89 in Las Vegas. ''The game is different,'' noted Ron. ''And why not try something different? Players deserve it.''

AmeriDarts also incorporates a philosophy all hold very dear—good, clean fun without the sex and violence that typically dominates video games. ''In listening to operators, we realize that they want games that earn them a fair return on investment, but none are sold on violent games. They buy them because that's all there is to buy. We sincerely feel that wholesome themes with terrific play appeal will be a welcome relief,'' added Joe.

Listening to operators is another goal that gets personal attention. ''By listening to operators, we can understand and try to anticipate some of their needs and then try to fill them,'' said Ron. ''We want to design games that will tap into the entertainment dollar of the people who made *Ms. Pac-Man* one of the hottest video games ever.''

Ameri prides itself on innovations, such as *AmeriDarts* having the first horizontal or vertical monitor. Ron and Dave, who head up software and hardware development, worked with their people to overcome the barriers. Said Frank, "I asked Ron to look into the possibilities of making the game available as a horizontal or vertical on two different PCBs. Ron was able to engineer it on the same board."

> **"Ameri's goal is quality, not quantity."**

Joe and Frank at AMOA '89.

"It's the first 100 percent active monitor game of this type," added Ron. "The market in video is such that if you can't be innovative, then you don't belong. But it's up to the operators to send that message back to the manufacturers by where they spend their money."

AmeriDarts has taken Ameri from the drawing board to the market in style. *AmeriDarts* has done for darts what *Capcom Bowling* has done for bowling. "It is a solid translation of the bigger sport onto a video monitor," said Dave.

He added, "*AmeriDarts* has shown the industry that we pay attention to details and listen to operators. There are very few video games that are designed for street operators. *Capcom Bowling* was one, *AmeriDarts* is another. It is appropriate for any type of location."

He continued, "*AmeriDarts* is a kit that has gone beyond the call of duty. We include a dual pin-out chart to place inside the cabinet for future reference. One side is specifically for *AmeriDarts*; the other side is a cross reference JAMMA standard. Detail is never boring when it makes the operator's life a little easier."

Frank, Joe, Ron, and Dave all feel that it is important to focus on American-made games. "We design a product in the United States with the United States as our primary market. We are not forced to release a product that is not quite in tune with the American market because of impending parallels from another market," explained Frank.

Their name goes on every phase of the game, from hardware design to customer service and support. "We want every aspect of our product to be the caliber that we, and our customers, can be proud of," they all agreed. ☐

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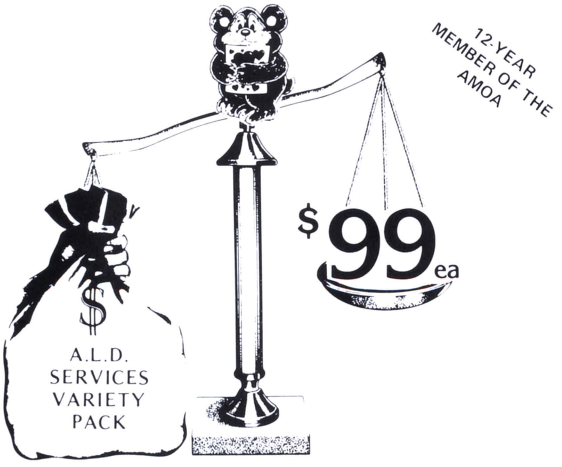

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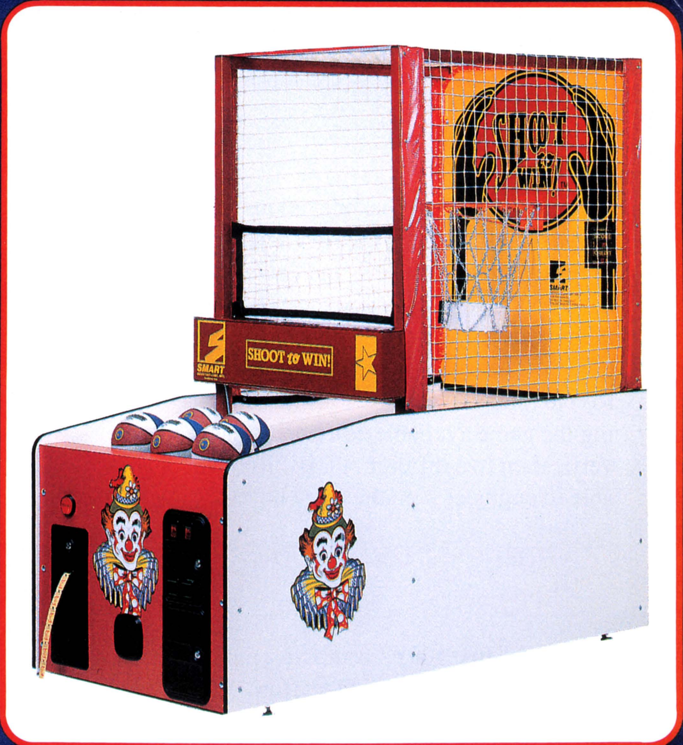
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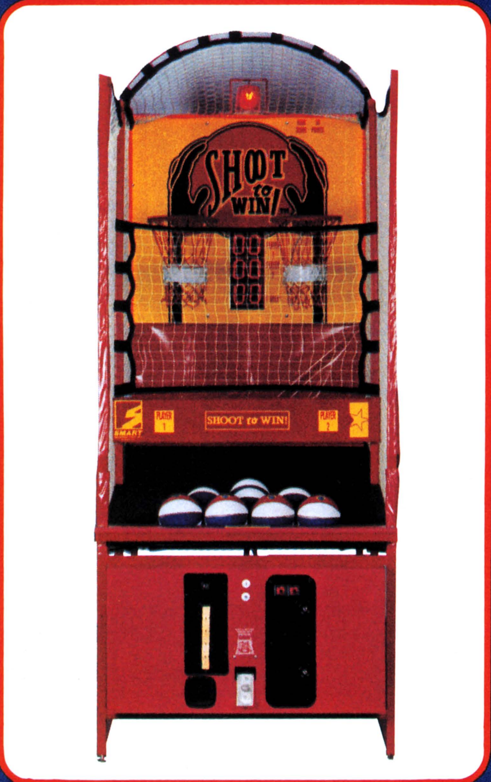
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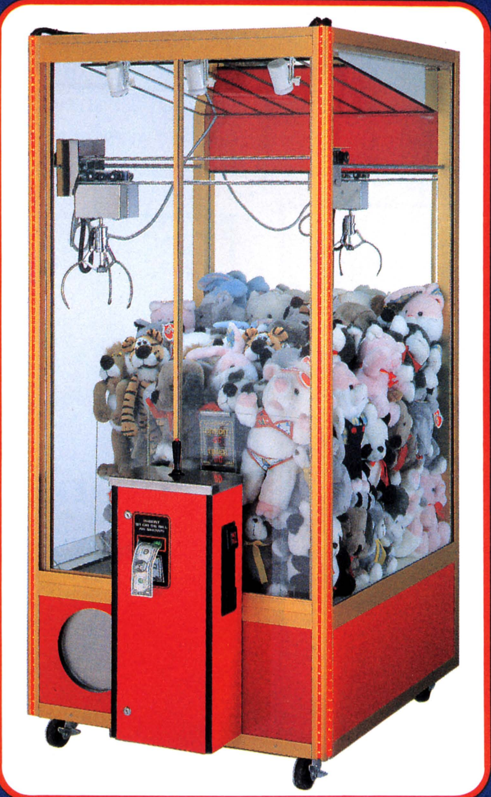

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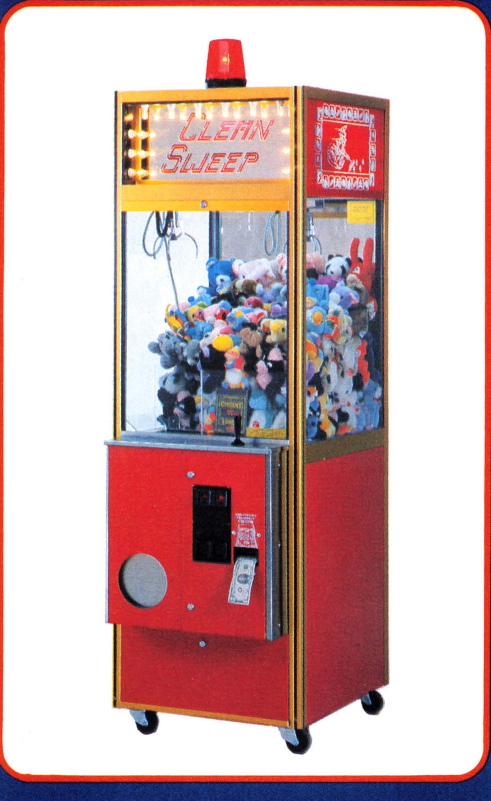
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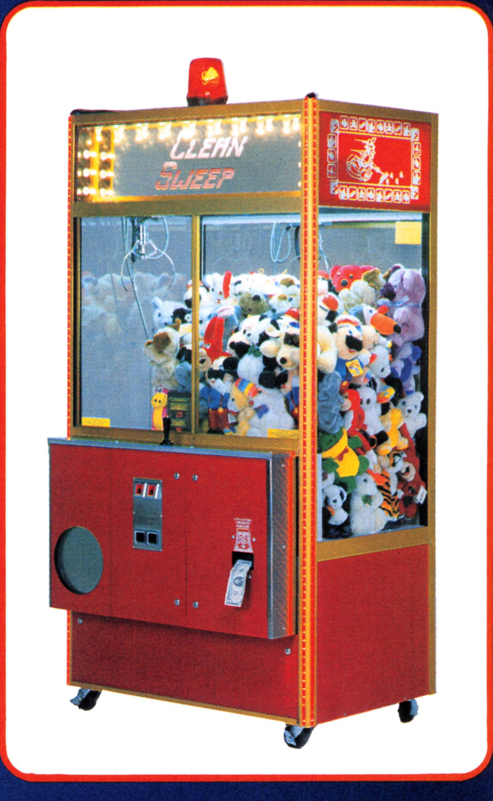
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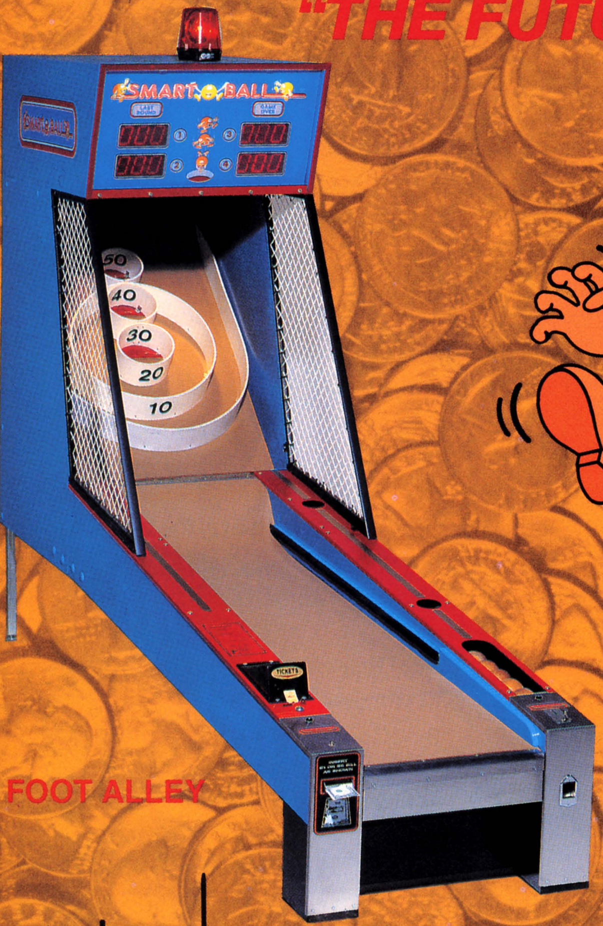
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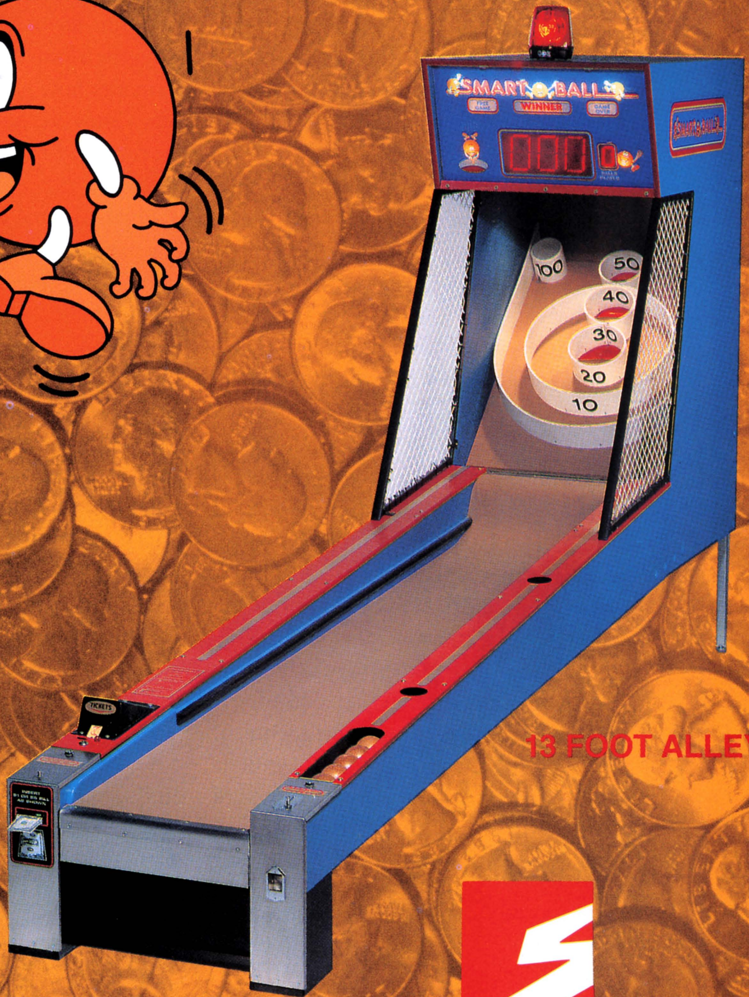
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Jack Guarnieri

Things operators never hear from their locations

As always, and thankfully, I've been busy and just got around to reading the Play Meter 1990 Directory issue.

I really got a good laugh reading the operator comments on the state of the industry. I've been in this business since 1975, and it's basically the same old story!

My company provides service—only service—for many operators with anywhere from two to 200 games. I have taken a close look at my customers and find that on the whole they are thriving. The reasons I have determined just may be able to help other operators also.

These operators are thriving because they have equipment on location that operates properly. It's not equipment that is working *just* OK. I'm happy to be able to help them keep their machines in top condition; that's my job.

Many operators simply clean out the cashbox. My customers clean the inside and outside of their games regularly. How can anyone play a game they can't see?

These operators know their technical skills—or lack of them—and keep their hands out of a game if they are not sure they can make the repair. This eliminates extra work for me and reduces their cost for repair of bad PC boards.

Smart operators buy new games, but not too many at once, and not on extended credit terms. Before they give out a bonus or a loan they give up the location, no matter how great it looks or how many years they've had it. When you start, there is no end that can benefit the operator.

Many of my customers know each other and have learned to cooperate. They even trade games with each other—many times a better deal than distributors can give them.

They have learned to look at the big picture. They watch the pennies and the dollars take care of themselves. They spend time learning all they can about a business that demands it. Every day I am still learning new things about this business.

Complaints do not solve anything. It's far better to get out there and do something. For some operators, almost anything they do would be an improvement.

On the lighter side, I have composed a light-hearted but true list of things that an average operator will never hear, even from their best locations:

1. ''This game makes so much money, I don't think we'll ever have to change it.''
2. ''I'll get the Windex and paper towels and clean the games myself.''
3. ''If you can't fix it today, don't worry. Come back next week.''
4. ''We really don't need new games.''
5. ''I got a letter from the city. They are lowering the taxes on video games.''
6. ''Someone broke into the games, but we found out who did it and got the money back.''
7. ''There was no damage from the break-in.''
8. ''I'm opening six new stores and need four games in each right away. They don't have to be brand new.''
9. ''No...50 percent is too much to give to me. Why don't you take 60 percent?''
10. ''My business is doing great. I want to lend you money!''
11. ''Wow! I don't have that game on my home system.''
12. ''You're the expert! Since you don't try to tell me how to run my business, I won't tell you how to run yours.'' ☐

Mardi Gras Madness

A photo essay of Fat Tuesday 1990

Clockwise from left: Renee Pierson's daughter Antigone playfully peeks through a mask while holding a cluster of balloons in the Mardi Gras colors of purple, green, and gold; The King of the Rhea parade with favored "throws"—emblemed cups and long beads; Clarinetist Pete Fountain marches through the streets with his Half Fast Marching Club.

Clockwise from upper right: Crowds gather on famous Bourbon Street in the heart of the French Quarter; Play Meter's Carol Lally (white hat) and Valerie Cognevich with family and friends; Creative costumes prevailed. Are these Slinky toys or air-conditioning ducts?; "Throw me something, mister!," cries the crowd; It wouldn't be Mardi Gras without a "moss man."

BOTTOMLESS
TOPLESS

Clockwise from upper left: All dressed up for the Bards of Bohemia ball, standing, (l-r): Carol Lally, Carol Ann Lally, and Renee Pierson; seated, (l-r): Leslie Lally and Antigone Pierson; The weird becomes normal on Fat Tuesday; Mindy Mitchell (Valerie's daughter) with a wizard and a frog; A small budget and a lot of imagination can create a "grape" costume; Bonnie Theard's husband Harold (third from left) on a float in the Mid-City parade.

Fred Lange
Games by the Sea
Orange Beach, Ala.

Seasoned operator gives common sense response

This commentary was written in reply to a letter we printed from James Orr in our January issue in the ''Reader's Response'' column.

Dear Nagging Questions,

I have been an operator since 1974, although I grew up in the coin machine business and previously worked for some fine operators and some not so fine. Nevertheless, each had his own niche in the coin-op industry.

Some had spotless routes and stressed machine cleanliness. For example, I worked one route that had two men on jukebox collections. One cleaned the machines inside and out, lubed, checked lights, changed records, etc. The other man checked out the cashbox, talked to the owner, got record requests, and smoothed out the road.

This route had some jukeboxes 10 and 12 years old on location as clean as the day they came out of the crate. They looked good, they worked, and there was very seldom any machine abuse. The same can be done for pool, pinball, and video. You seem to be concerned about how much you gross and how much others gross and not the bottom line—that's where the profit is.

As far as distributors, they are no more responsible for your success or failure than I am. Distributors do not manufacture games. And a distributor in his right mind would never guarantee a trouble-free machine, or that the cashbox would be full every time you checked the game. Every game will not work in every location.

That is where you come in, Mr. Operator. You know your route, your game rooms. You should know your customers and what they will play and what they won't. It's your job to know how long to keep a game, when to let go, when to kit, when not to kit, and when to rotate. That is all the operator's job, not the distributor's.

Your statement, ''The location takes 50 percent,'' is not true. You *give* 50 percent of your business away. Do you think the beer distributor, cookie man, bread man, or any other vendors of items sold by bars, stores, etc., on your route give 50 percent of their business away? Wake up and operate, operator! Quit pointing your finger at everybody else.

As for the manufacturers of video games, music, pool, pinball, etc., I for one do not believe that they prosper by sending out defective parts in their games. It is impossible to play each game that comes off the line. It is possible that they could receive a bad run of parts that previously worked fine. Don't throw the baby out with the bath water. Everybody makes mistakes.

> ***''A distributor in his right mind would never guarantee a trouble-free machine, or that the cashbox would be full every time you checked the game.''***

I happen to think that on the average the manufacturers are doing a fine job and are trying to improve. After all, it is in their best interest to do a better job. However, they cannot relieve you of your part.

I would like to hear from the manufacturer after he sees some of his games sitting on location with dirty cabinets, header lights burned out, button switches that don't work, joysticks that are past their prime, sloppy shifting levers, or unmaintained steering wheel assemblies. Would they take blame for this? I think not. This is the operator's fault.

Now for machine price. Here is a formula for your records: one 1980 quarter is worth seven cents in buying power in 1990. If in 1980 a game was priced at $1,300 to $1,500, at that rate, it should cost $18,564 today. I only hope that the manufacturers can hold the line this well for the next ten years. I, for one, give them a job well-done.

In the last decade, manufacturers have given us the best, most innovative games that the coin machine operating community has ever been privileged to buy. The manufacturers do care and they do listen. But they can't make drastic changes to suit a few. That is why AMOA has formed a standardization committee to consult with them. Do you belong to AMOA? If not, maybe you should join and you'll have a team to work with. You may even get involved or lead the way on some changes.

While I'm at it, I would like to recommend that you get involved in your state association, too. Also you should be attending AMOA and the ACME show for the seminar programs. If you want education, they have it. They also have some of the seminars on tape if you can't attend in person.

In the coin-operating tribe, the operator is a regular Indian, not a chief. When the Indians don't follow and get out of step with the chief, the whole tribe is thrown into disarray.

> ***"In the last decade, manufacturers have given us the best, most innovative games that the coin machine operating community has ever been privileged to buy."***

Operators need to take the lead of manufacturers. Raise play price and get a better cut for your end. Wake up, the manufacturers are telling you something. I hope Mr. Success can relay it to you. If not, I will. Prices are on the way up. They can't wait for you forever. Let's hope that the Indians that got in step don't march off and leave you in their dust.

Finally, there are the trade magazines. Whether it be Play Meter or any other, their main job is to report on the industry, tell us what is going on, who does what, update us on tax laws, provide the latest technical tips, etc. I have been a Play Meter subscriber ever since the first copy came off the press in 1974. If I didn't think that I gained something from this magazine, I would have stopped taking it long ago.

I have seen these people working at trade shows; they work hard to get their stories, not only at the shows but all year long. And even though they are diligent in their jobs, you should not take everything as gospel. But, hey, get real. You can sift out the B.S. from reality if you know anything at all about your business.

I think your label of "propaganda times" is harsh and unjust. You simply do not understand the coin machine operating business as well as you think. It's a far cry from Billboard and Marketplace. Not that they weren't good in their day, but the trade magazines of today are of far superior quality than in years past. Be patient; they will evolve with the times as we all do.

One more word of caution: don't let Mr. Success stand in front of you. Sometimes he can blind you.

Good operating! ☐

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Christopher Caire

Redemption: a good idea—if you know what you're doing

"Diversity is the answer, I'm telling you," says the wise old operator to his inexperienced colleague. "I've been in this industry for many a moon. When video game revenues go south, I hitch my wagon to something else. My advice, son, is to get into redemption."

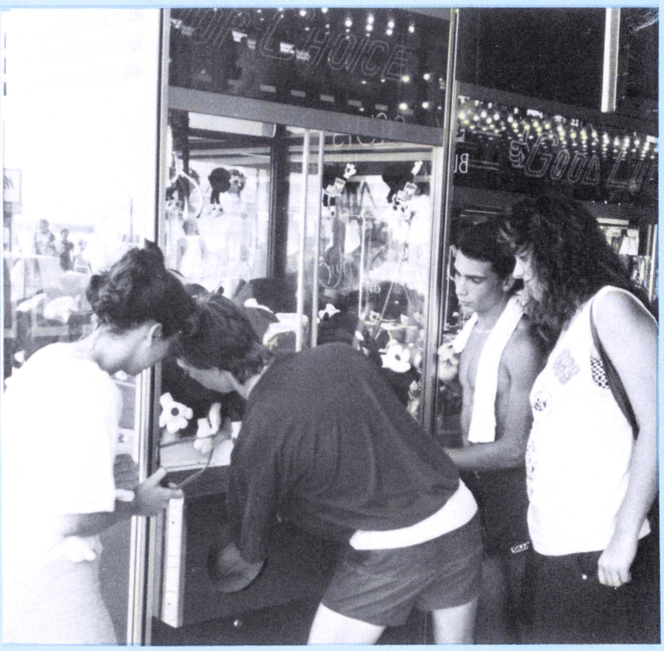
To many operators, the old man's advice rings true. Reports from across the country testify to the attributes of ticket-dispensing redemption equipment. But these operators, it's safe to say, have one thing in common: they conducted extensive research into redemption before investing a bundle of money. They learned that it requires more than top-notch equipment to launch a successful redemption operation.

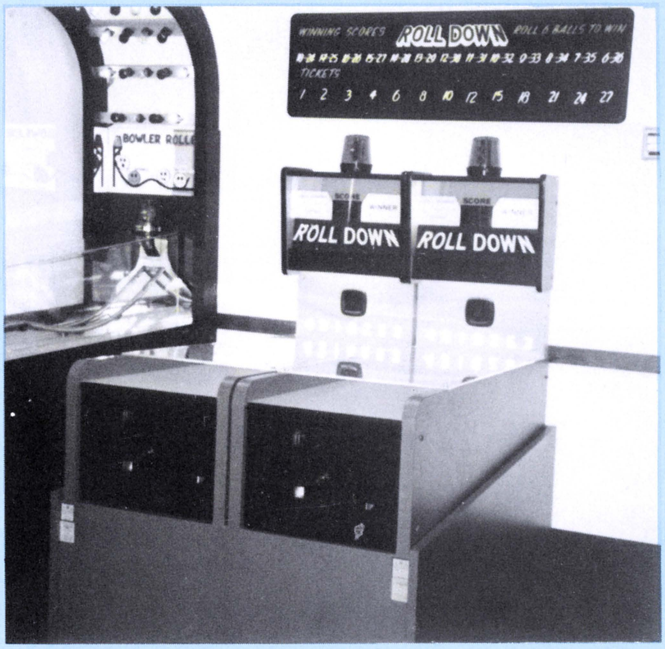
Linda Fernandez is president of Fernandez Fun Factory, a chain of 31 amusement centers in Hawaii. She and her family know all of the nuances associated with redemption, or, as she put it, "it's like letting Brer Rabbit loose in the briar patch." The Fernandez clan has an extensive background in carnivals, operating E.K. Fernandez Shows, "the Barnum and Bailey of the Pacific," she said. Coin-op distributing is also covered through their company, 50th State Coin-Op.

What does it take to be successful? The answer to that question can't be found in a "how-to" book.

"There aren't any easy formulas or simple, pat answers," Fernandez said. "It must be taken on a case-by-case basis, and the operator has to be thoughtful. He has to realize that he's signing on for more than the price of the equipment. Personally speaking, merchandising and redemption have always been part of our business. We didn't get into it because video wasn't going well. A lot of new people don't realize what they're in for in terms of how much work is required."

That said, Fernandez gave some insight as to how redemption is handled at a typical Fun Factory store. Which brings us


Teens try for prizes in Betson's *Top Choice* crane.



Redemption choices include Bay-Tek's *Roll Down* and Bob's Space Racers' *Bowler Roller*.

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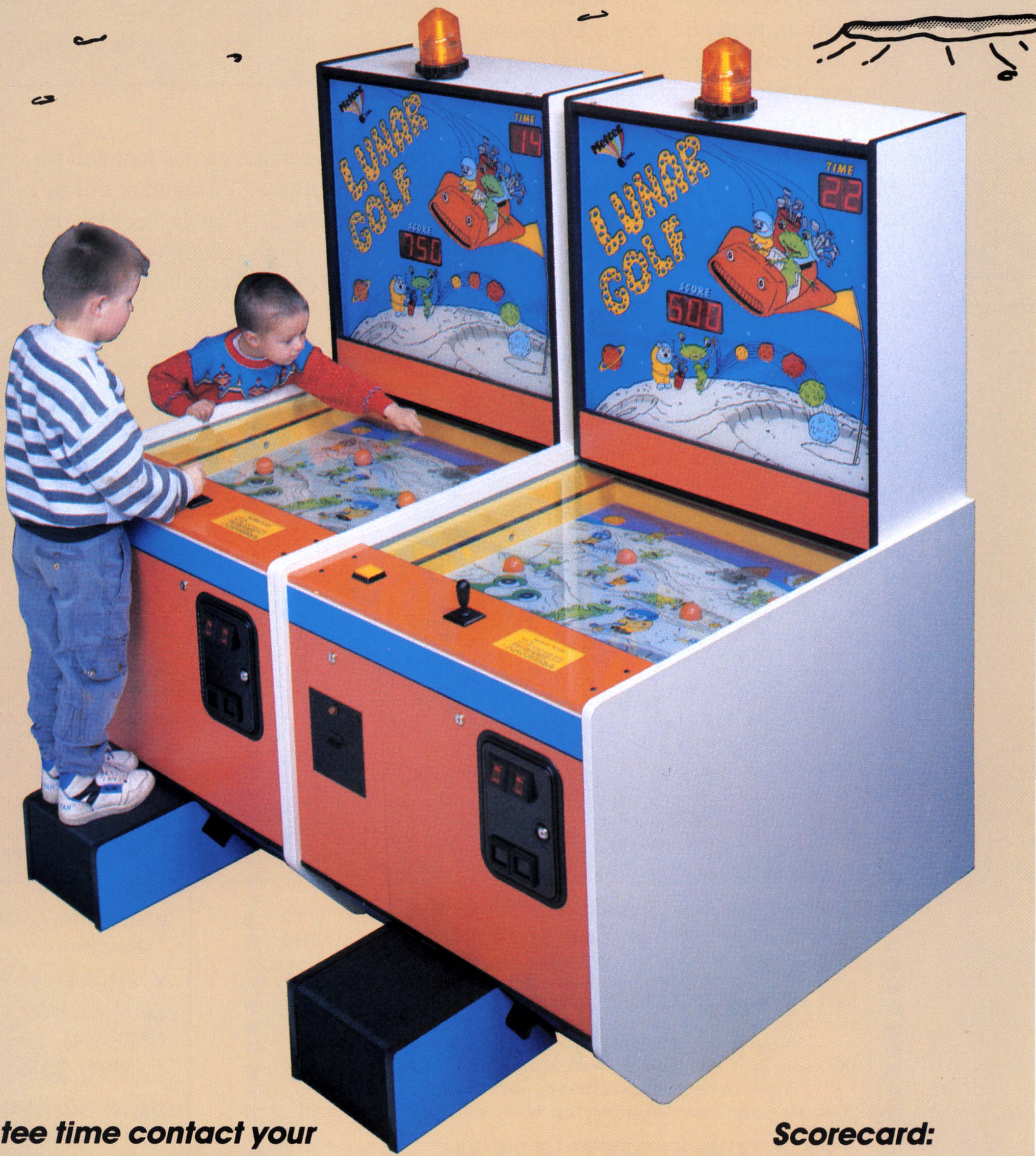

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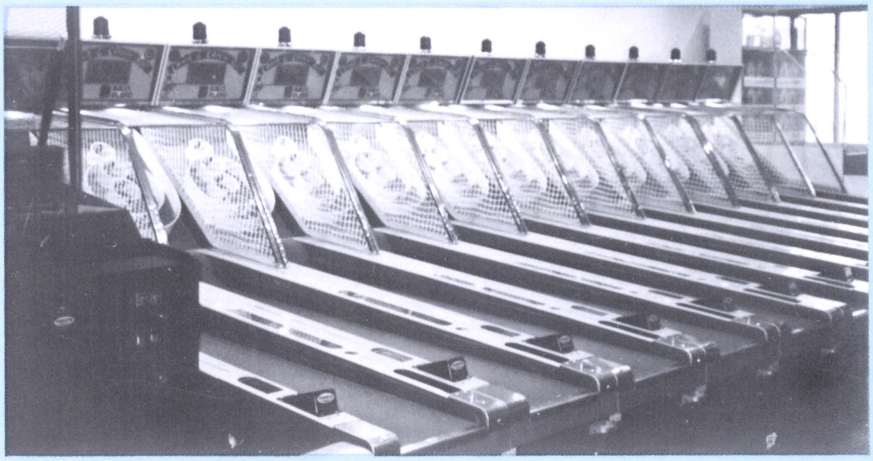
to the first point: there is no typical store.

"Things vary greatly from location to location," she said. "For example, we have 20 stores on the mainland. These are what I call 'tourist situations,' where the people change all of the time. We have more redemption equipment in these than we do in our other locations, which cater more to the local populace.

"Our overall mix in the Fun Factories is about one-third redemption, two-thirds video, pinball, and the like," Fernandez continued. "Some stores have more than one-third; others have no redemption at all. You have to know your location and what suits its particular needs. For example, our merchandise mix for the tourist situation is geared toward an older crowd. They don't want merchandise that has to be packed up and brought back home to Massachusetts. Also, since many tourists are from Japan, we need to print game instructions in Japanese so they know what to do!"



A bank of *Skee-Ball* games are sure-fire winners for any redemption-minded location.

As for the specific games found in her company's stores, Fernandez doesn't waver when asked about the bedrock, the foundation within a redemption mix.

"I think *Skee-Ball* is the best game ever made, period," she said. "There aren't a lot of bugs involved, unlike many of the newer redemption pieces, which are a repair nightmare. We love the *Mini Skee-Ball*, too.

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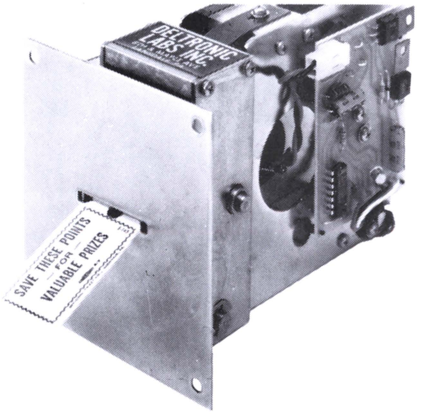

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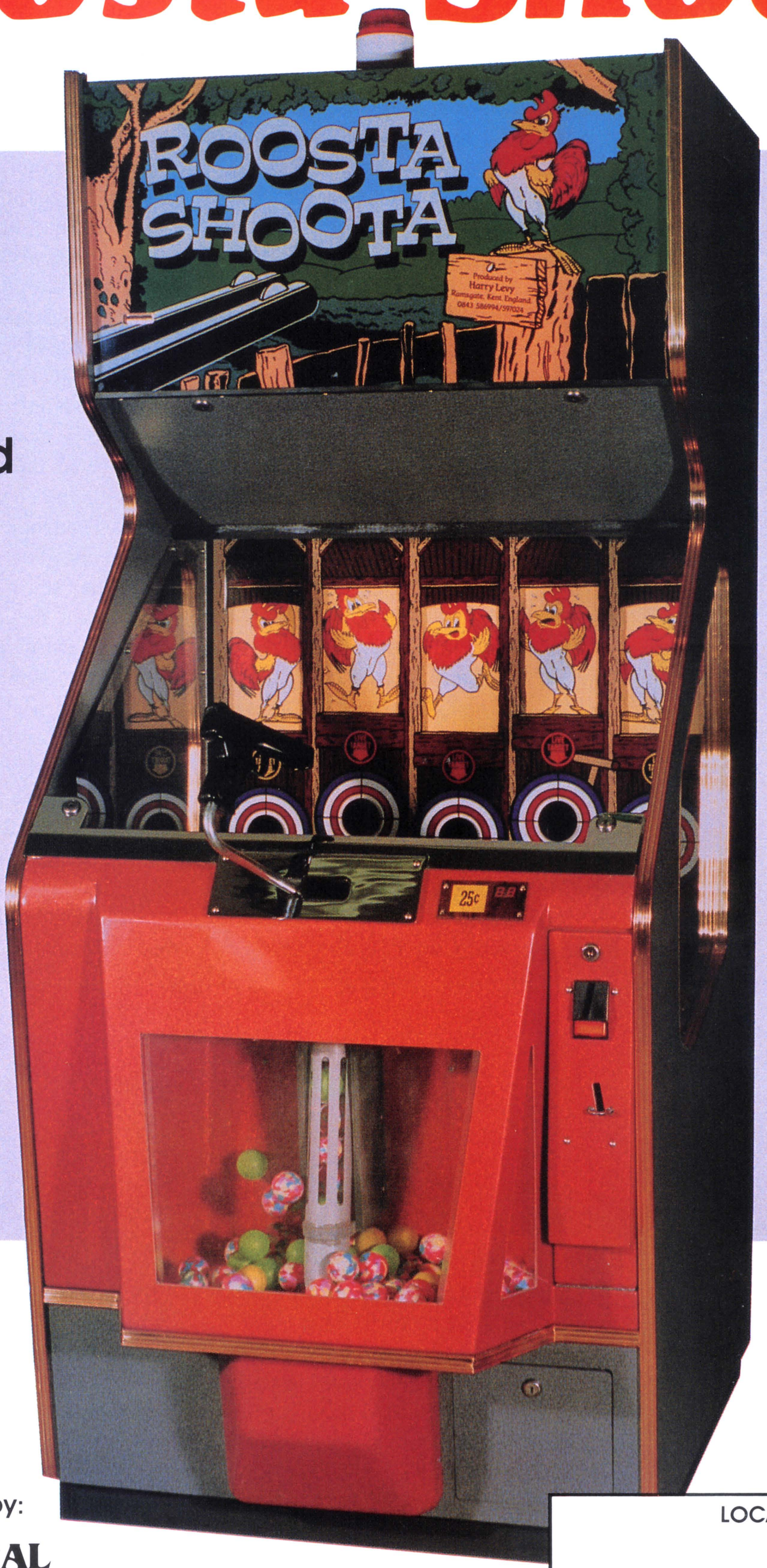
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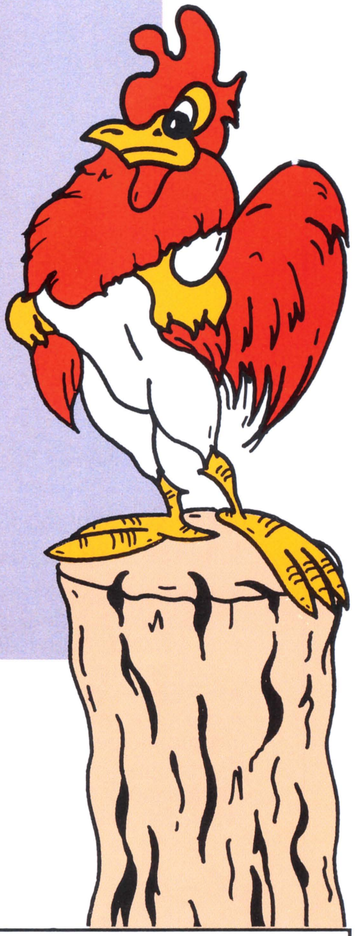

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"Equipment from Bob's Space Racers, like *Bowler Roller*, is good and reliable—but it isn't cheap," Fernandez continued. "As for basketball games, I liked Doyle's original *Hoop Shot*. It was heavy and strong. The more recent models are lighter and less-sturdy, but they're good. Smart's *Shoot to Win* is also a nice basketball game. These are quality basketball games, but I'm still looking for one made better, with less nagging problems that seem to pop up. We also include cranes and roll-downs in our redemption mix."

A problem for a big chain like Fernandez Fun Factory, she says, is the high-cost of theft. Most of it is in-house, and it happens, in part, because of carelessness on the part of manufacturers, Fernandez added.

"We're very interested in control, but we don't have that control when it comes to in-house theft," she said. "There is a big black market for tickets and tokens, because in effect, they are money. Service technicians have open access to tickets when fixing a coin mechanism. These employees shouldn't be given this temptation to steal tickets. Lack of recognition of this problem is my biggest peeve with coin-op manufacturers."

Another manufacturer sin that needs atonement is a lack of fresh ideas, Fernandez believes.

"There's really been nothing new in redemption, just updated versions of old equipment," she said. "Manufacturers should get innovative and make some new sports redemption games. I'd love a good, physical baseball game where you knock things down. Also, how about a *really* good football game? Whoever comes up with one will have a sure-fire winner. We could use a better golf game, one with putting, that's not only good but takes up the space of a *Hoop Shot*. I wonder why successful manufacturers of basketball games couldn't follow up with one of these sports?"

Again, though, it must be pointed out that having the right equipment is only part of the puzzle. Redemption is not like video, where weeding out the plums from the pits is your challenge. Once you find that gem, it essentially boils down to "plug it in and get a lock for the cashbox," Fernandez said.

"But with redemption, you have a lot of other administrative costs to go along with the price of the equipment," she said. "There's the cost of the tickets and the prizes. Then there are the countless questions to consider. Do I have the tickets at the proper setting? Where do I put the tickets after they've been redeemed, so they aren't stolen and used again? What kinds of merchandise do I want as prizes? How many of each particular one? Who do I order the prizes from? How will I arrange the prizes on shelves? Where will I store everything? These are just some of the many questions that you have to answer.

"Also, redemption leads you down the road of taking on more space. Operators have to decide if they're ready to take on this additional space, because it almost always has to be done."

"Operators have to decide if they're willing to take on additional space, because it almost always has to be done."

At a Fernandez Fun Factory, players can win a prize with as little as one ticket. Advising other operators how to set their ticket values is impossible, Fernandez says, because there are too many factors unique to each operation.

"Before you can decide the value of the tickets, you have to determine what your costs and expenses are going to be in conjunction with that merchandise," she said. "Ours is a very large operation; we have our own merchandising department. They've established 39 classes of merchandise, and each carries a different markup. It's like a department store, which has different markups for jewelry and cosmetics. Our merchandising department creates the classes of merchandise and the price structure for each class. Every operator is different. As I've said, there are no easy formulas!''

In closing, Fernandez offered beginning operators some pearls of wisdom, gleaned from many years of experience.

''The most important thing is to make sure the location is correct for what you're doing,'' she said. ''You have to do that first; getting the right games is secondary. Any successful redemption operation must have *Skee-Ball* in the mix. If you want an idea of what kinds of pieces to buy, just go to some other game rooms with redemption. Observe what games are commonly being played by the kids, parents, and grandparents. Also, get a good technical staff; you're going to need it.

''Operators have to remember that this is a business. It's the same as if they were opening a computer store or auto center: planning is critical. With redemption, if you don't have the proper location and a willingness to work hard daily, don't bother with it. If you do, the chances are good that you'll be successful.''

''There are no easy formulas, no simple, pat answers, for determining such things as ticket values. Each operator has a particular set of circumstances.''

Video rival?

An even larger chain of amusement centers with redemption is Sega's Time Out. There are 89 locations in 18 states, plus Puerto Rico. All have redemption equipment, except for two locations that are restricted because of local zoning problems.

''Redemption has proven to be very profitable for us,'' said John Denlinger, the vice president of operations. ''It has enlarged our customer base to include small children, their parents, and even the grandparents. Redemption is not limited in appeal to teenagers.''

A representative Time Out center will include anywhere from two to 20 *Skee-Balls*, Denlinger said, depending on the size of the location, its revenues, the traffic patterns, etc. There will also be one or more coin-op basketball games, cranes, rotaries, and pieces from Bob's Space Racers (*Bowler Roller, Cat Can Alley,* and *Super Shifter*) and Wedges/Ledges (*Lucky Seven* and *Bingo*).

What about the idea of setting up redemption in conjunction with video games? Denlinger said Time Out has tried it a few times, ''but the results weren't good. *Capcom Bowling* did so-so. You're dealing with a different type of player, usually teenage males. They aren't too interested in playing for redemption prizes.''

Fernandez agreed, saying the nature of redemption hinges on being rewarded for accomplishing something, most often via physical interaction. The concept of getting a stuffed animal for blasting Ninjas on a video screen isn't one that's likely to catch on, she feels.

The ticket values for each Time Out location are managed centrally from the headquarters in Fairfax, Va. ''We track the sales and make an independent judgment for each location,'' Denlinger said. ''It isn't left up to local management.''

Denlinger believes a day could come where redemption equipment might equal—dare say, even supplant—video as the arcade's ''king of the hill.''

''I could see that happening, because the market is certainly there,'' he said. ''What's needed is more new product. The success rate for redemption equipment is higher than video, and the earnings potential is longer. A classic example is *Skee-Ball*. There is something about that game which has kept it popular for generations.'' ☐

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Bonnie Theard

Traveling down the road to redemption

The coin-op roadmap is marked with signs that all point the way to redemption. Video is mired in repetitive fighting themes and operators report revenue down, way down. Video prices are higher than ever and games built around fads can quickly go from obscurity to oblivion. Only a few stand out in the crowded marketplace. Something has got to give.

For Les Silver of Chicagoland Vending in Northbrook, Ill., that ''something'' has been a turn to redemption. Silver opened a new 3,000 square foot family game room, Diversions/Fun & Games, in the Atlanta area early last month. It's no surprise that redemption will be heavily emphasized.

Silver recognized all the warning signs long ago and started a concerted redemption research program. A 25-year coin-op veteran, Silver has historically run two-thirds amusement games and one-third vending. He is expanding his vending business and jumping into redemption with both feet. Why?

Silver responds, ''One motivator for sure is the lack of exciting video games. Unless the manufacturers start helping the coin-op business instead of just the home market, we have to look to other sources of revenue. One of those sources is redemption. We can't sit back and wait for the video cashbox take to improve.''

Silver owns and operates a Chicago area Diversions game room and is a partner in two other game rooms: Kristof's in Round Lake, Ill., and Friar Tuck's in Calumet City, Ill. Two more Diversions are planned for the Chicago area, one a few months down the road and another in a year's time. Silver also maintains street locations such as taverns, bowling center game rooms, and a string of game rooms in major hotels.

The Diversions in Atlanta is the first one that will include redemption designed into the location from the ground up. The other two new Diversions will be just as heavy into redemption. When space permits, he would like to put redemption equipment in his other game room locations as well.

Silver kindly let us outline the steps he took on his way to this major decision. And he shared some of his philosophies on operating along the way.

Step 1: Do your homework

Silver thoroughly investigated the world of redemption. He observed other successful operations, read everything he could put his hands on concerning the subject, talked with manufacturers and distributors about product, obtained plush and toy catalogs to study, and even visited the headquarters of several merchandise suppliers. He did his homework before taking the plunge.

Step 2: Select a good site

New shopping centers are ideal locations since they usually have a good traffic flow. Silver looks for a center with a variety of shops, eating establishments, movie theaters, and record and video rental stores—places that appeal to teens and people of all ages.

Step 3: Check the competition

Before going any further, check the competition in the area. How much can it support?

Silver's recommendation: ''Based on my experience, I wouldn't go into this with someone close to me doing the same thing because you will just split the entertainment money. For most parts of the country, an operator cannot make this kind of investment too close to another operator. There are only so many quarters to go around.''

Also check local laws and regulations that may have an impact on the type of facility you are planning. Check out the demographics of the area, where the schools are located, and get a grasp on the viability of your proposed game room.

Step 4: Make it attractive

Silver believes in spending handsomely on decor to make an extremely attractive place where families feel comfortable coming in or dropping kids off. Says Silver, ''It's up to the management to keep the right image. Run promotions, have charity functions, do whatever it takes to become an important part of the neighborhood in which you operate.''

Step 5: Maximize customers through the product mix

Silver chose a mix of bowlers, basketball games, coin pushers, and children's games, among other redemption pieces.

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Adds Silver, ''It's important to maximize your customers—have games that appeal to all different age groups. I want customers from the age of five on up to have something to play in my game rooms. Redemption equipment allows that.''

Step 6: Hire mature employees

''I won't hire a manager under the age of 25,'' states Silver. ''Someone younger can't control kids. It's too much of a peer situation. The manager must be looked up to with respect.

''I try to explain to managers in training that kids have to know that you mean business. You have to correct them in such a way that they think you're a good guy. There are rules that have to be followed. It's all in the tone of voice. If you gain their respect you've got it made.

''Especially in a location where merchandise is involved, you don't want someone behind the counter giving out $30 worth of prizes for $2 worth of tickets. Be selective in who you employ. It will pay off in the long run.''

Step 7: Run a tight ship

Another key in any successful operation is how you run it. ''None of my game rooms allow smoking or drinking,'' commented Silver. ''We want families to come in and enjoy themselves and not be intimidated.

''If we boot someone out they are banned for one week. The next time it's one month. They soon shape up. The manager has to be able to handle situations firmly.''

Step 8: Be generous

Silver explains, ''If you run a neighborhood amusement center where you build a local area trade, it's very important to make sure your percentage of return is generous. You want customers to return. The more tickets they win, the more they come back.

> ***''We can't sit back and wait for the video cashbox to improve.''***

''I hope to keep the return between 25 and 28 percent, where people will feel they are getting a fair shake. If it takes giving away 30 percent all the time, then that's what should be done.

''I've observed that players over 21 and under 14 will play redemption games. Customers between the ages of 12 to 16 are still big on videos.''

Ticket control is important. Silver is implementing a system using a manager who will be responsible for controlling the redemption area. Meters on the machines are used to control tickets going in and out. Tickets represent money, about $20 a roll. Ticket value toward redemption is one cent per ticket.

It breaks down like this: An item that costs the operator $1 to put on the shelf will require 100 tickets to win. A larger item that costs $10 to the operator (item cost including freight, etc.) can be won with 1,800 tickets.

A good range of prizes is recommended, from those easily won in a single game room visit to those that keep customers coming back for a goal.

Silver is starting off using all tickets. He views this system as one that's easier to control and easier in bookkeeping initially.

Step 9: Carefully select stock

Have a change in plush and toys, stay on top of buying, and watch your pricing. As with the vending business, where brand name snacks and candy draw more interest than off-brands, Silver recommends prizes and toys featuring familiar figures from cartoons and movies.

Step 10: Consider it a major commitment

We're talking serious dollars when everything is put together. On the redemption area alone in the new Diversions in Atlanta, Silver spent $8,000. This includes the front counter with shelves, back counter, and wall display for an 18-foot-long counter. The initial order for plush and prizes totaled $10,000.

Add approximately $70,000 in redemption equipment, $80,000 in other game equipment, $60,000 to dress the store out, plus the cost of tickets ($1 per 1,000 when ordering one million) and a ticket shredder, and you quickly have a tab of about $228,000. And that's before paying rent or salaries, and before the first customer even walks through the door. Not for the faint of heart.

Step 11: Have an escape hatch

As an operator with street locations as well as game rooms, Silver has the flexibility of moving equipment when one type of game slows down. ''An individual who opens one game room will have a more difficult time,'' observed Silver. To get the best arrangement, Silver confers with his attorney and tries to tailor leases to his benefit, allowing him to downsize the operation or make other adjustments later. He's not always successful but tries for it.

Step 12: Be aggressive

''Having been in this business since 1965, I felt I had the background and experience needed to make this commitment to redemption,'' he concluded. ''You cannot be conservative; you have to be aggressive and make the right decisions. Think positively.'' ☐

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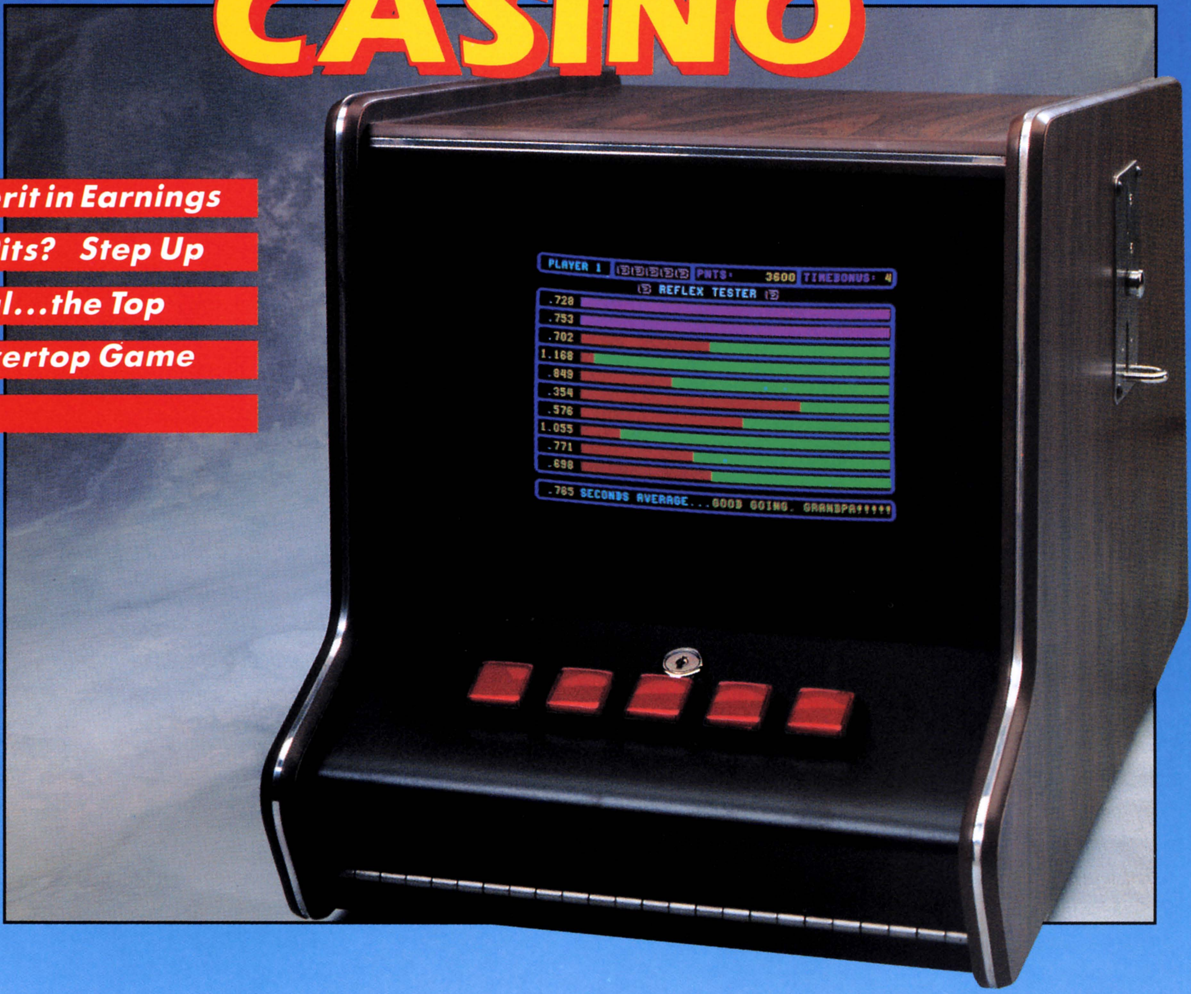
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Ticket manufacturers meet product demand

Ticket manufacturers like Muncie Novelty Co. and National Ticket Co. are finding themselves in the enviable position of trying to keep up with an increased product demand, due partly to a greater emphasis on redemption equipment.

According to Bob Broyles, president of Muncie Novelty, "We have seen large increases in the redemption ticket business in the three years we have been supplying product for that market. We could see the growing demand for that type of ticket. Quarter pushers account for part of that increase."

Muncie has a 50-year history of manufacturing roll tickets for theaters. Its factory and offices are in one location in Muncie, Ind. At Muncie, a minimum imprinted order (with the name of the location) is 160,000 tickets; an order of one million or more comes in at $1 per thousand.

Tickets are available in seven colors: gray, pink, red, blue, green, orange, and yellow. Stock redemption tickets (those printed with the generic wording "one coupon") cost less to the operator and come in the same seven colors. Stock tickets require a minimum order of 60,000 and are priced at $1.25 per thousand.

Customers must allow three to four weeks for an imprinted order, next day for stock tickets. Custom printed orders take time to schedule on the press and process.

What about the future for ticket companies? It appears to be bright. Broyles characterized the market as "expanding."

National Ticket Co. has its business offices in New York City and manufacturing factory in Shamokin, Pa. Bill Alter, vice president of sales, shares an optimistic view of ticket demand for the '90s.

"It is our belief that redemption still has not peaked and growth will continue at least through this year and possibly through 1991," said Alter. "We are able to meet any demand this industry can impose.

"On an annual basis, from 1988 through 1989, our redemption business is up 34 percent and is still continuing through the first two months of this year, compared with the first two months of last year."

At National, the minimum order is 20,000 tickets for both special printing or stock tickets. Special printing can involve a name and/or logo, whatever the customer requests. Costs vary depending on the type of order. Orders in the millions of tickets bring the cost down to the range of $1.20 per thousand.

National has an 83-year history in the ticket business, dating back to 1907. The company supplies tickets for all types of amusement equipment, transportation, and theaters. Ten distinct colors, from light to dark, are available on special orders. Stock ticket colors are at the company's option. The normal shipping period for custom tickets is two weeks from the original order date. Stock tickets go out the next day.

Alter considers an order for 100,000 tickets as small and an order for 700,000 tickets to one million tickets for an operating season as normal. "Depending on the size of the operation," he noted, "the order can be for several million at a time. Arcade game room chains will use between 20,000 and 40,000 tickets per location per week. Some locations use 100,000 tickets per week."

Alter adds that major redemption machine companies offer formulas to help operators establish the value of each ticket. This is something that must be decided upon in advance. "The average value of tickets in America is one cent," advises Alter.

How does the operator decide how many tickets he will need for his locations? The ticket order is based on the value of the ticket. Here's one formula: if a game room's redemption equipment pays back between 20 and 25 percent, take the total gross of the redemption machine times the percentage of payback (20-25 percent) and divide by the value of each ticket.

Ticket values are determined by who the players are going to be, says Alter. "Very young players may need a ticket value as low as 1/10 of one percent. If players are all teens and are good players, their tickets may have a value as high as three cents each. Very young children want to see more paper than merchandise."

Alter recommends that operators seek out local supply companies for ticket accessories such as shredders, scales, and counters.

From every standpoint, joining the redemption ranks requires a great deal of advance planning and follow-through. In addition to careful product selection to match the player base, operators need to thoroughly research prizes and establish fair ticket values. For more ticket information, call Muncie Novelty (317) 288-8301 and National Ticket Co. (212) 757-1426. □

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ASK THE OPERATOR

Question:

Are you into redemption, and if so, how heavily? If not, what are your reasons for avoiding it?

A

Douglas Minter
Tip Top Amusement Co.
Carson City, Nev.

Yes, we operate between 25 to 30 cranes in our locations, many of which are within casinos. Ninety percent of the casinos in Nevada don't own their own amusement games; we provide the advantage of rotation for them. We're going to be opening a casino arcade that'll have some equipment with ticket dispensers—*Skee-Ball* and *Boom-Ball*, for example—in addition to the cranes.

This arcade will have an attendant to set the ticket values, make change, and hand out the prizes. The prize area will consist of the usual things like plush toys and jewelry. Also, I expect to have more expensive prizes like portable radios or other items that would fit logically in a redemption set-up.

A

Ralph Craun
Showalter Amusement Co.
Harrisonburg, Va.

One of our locations is a summer resort near a lake. A lot of young people play bowlers and basketball games with ticket dispensers. Overall, I'd say about 25 percent of our business is made up of redemption equipment.

The owner of that resort handles the redemption area. It used to be that plush made up the bulk of the prizes, but it's gone more to jewelry and novelty items lately. We also give out portable radios and big, two-foot stuffed bears and horses, among other things.

Plush toys have pretty-well had it in Virginia, because cranes have suffered tremendously since we got a lottery. Before, a crane might bring in $500 or $600 a week; now it's down to $100. I only operate one or two of them in convenience stores. They've gone to pot.

A

John Yarcusko
Towne Music Co.
Madison, Ohio

I've considered redemption equipment—pieces that have ticket dispensers—off and on, but I just feel that it would be more effort than it's worth. I've heard and read about operators who have done well with redemption, but speaking for my business, I don't think we can promote redemption long enough to make it a lasting effort. The effort required to make it work would be greater than what I would get back in dollars and cents.

Some say you should get into redemption when business gets bad. I liken an operator getting into redemption because business is bad to a bar owner bringing in live music for the same reason. Before you know it, he will have gotten himself into a worse financial situation.

I have mostly street locations with adult players. The redemption pieces wouldn't go over very well there, so why fool with them?

A

John Mihalakis
Rich and Junnies Coin
Dubuque, Iowa

We're a good-sized operation; our hands are full enough without messing with ticket-dispensing redemption pieces. It would be a lot of extra hassle. Also, we aren't in an area where bowlers and those types of machines are popular.

We are, however, big into cranes. As of now, we operate between 35 to 40 of them. After the ACME show, I expect to buy another 20 or so. But again, as for the other kinds of redemption pieces, we don't use them.

A

Gary Green
Green Amusement
Louisville, Ky.

We don't have any ticket-dispensing equipment at all. Maybe it's my lack of sophistication to know how to make redemption work, but I don't think it would do very well for us. We don't have any arcades; ours is strictly a street route.

We do have several cranes on the route, though. They are good, reliable earners for the business. But none of our locations would lend themselves to redemption pieces with ticket dispensers. □

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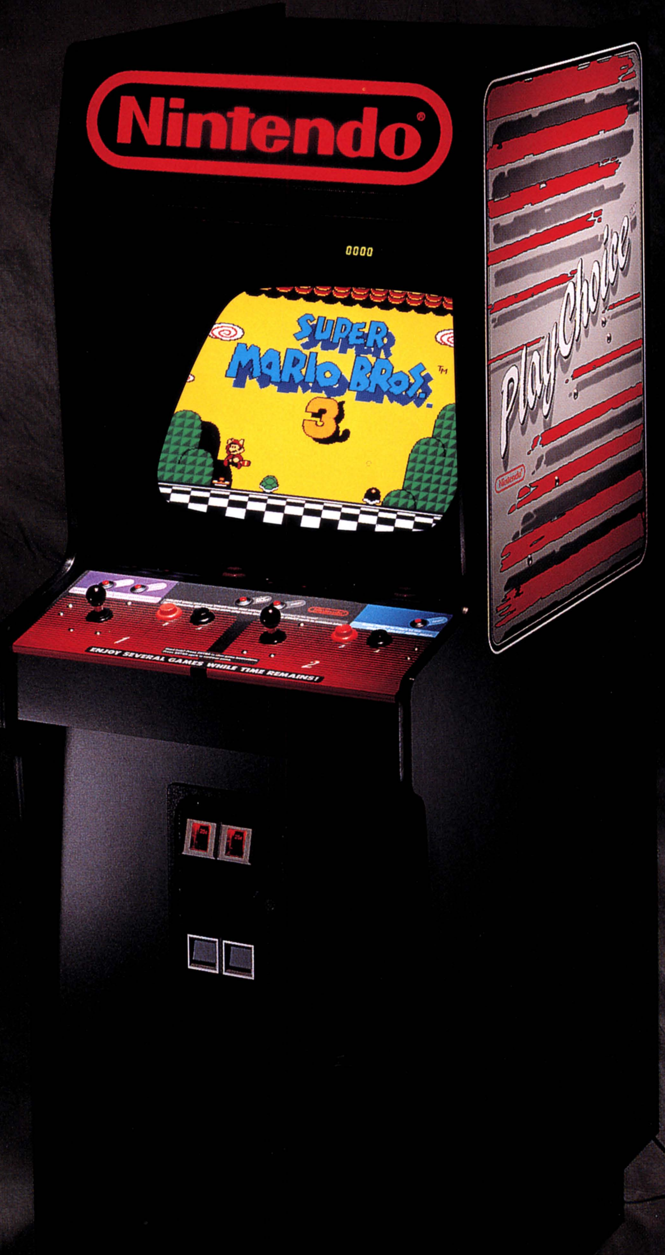
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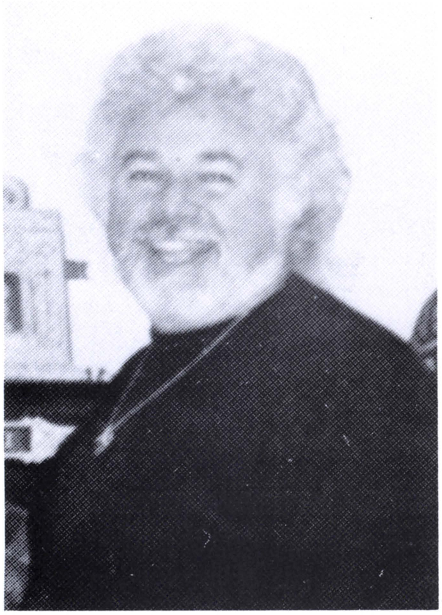

Ron Getlan

Ron Getlan has been in the coin-op business since he was eight years old. His first job was handing out tickets on the* Skee-Ball *machines at his father's arcade, which he did while standing on a milk box. He was later promoted to making change for the penny, nickel, and dime machines. Both he and his brother Mel worked summers and after school at their dad's arcade, The Adventurers on Central Park Avenue in Yonkers, N.Y.

The business has grown from the original arcade, begun in 1951 by Ron's parents Isadore (Issy) and Beatrice, to a myriad of locations that include go-cart tracks, bowling centers, amusement parks, and all types of arcades.

Ron and Mel continue to run the business their father started. In addition, Ron's son Wayne and Mel's children, Michael and Lynda, work full time in the business.

What are the advantages and disadvantages to having that many family members in one business?

The advantage is that each one has an interest and works many long hours. One problem that can exist is when one family member tells an employee to do something and the other family member comes along and tells the employee to do something different. It can be confusing to employees. But we all have our areas of responsibility and try to know what is going on. We see each other every day and talk about what's happening. Another advantage is that one can cover for the other. We all work together very well.

Did your kids begin working in the business when they were younger?

My son started when he was nine years old. He was a ''G'' man.

What is a ''G'' man?

He cleaned up the garbage! Now the kids are in ''OIT.'' That is, ''Owner in Training.'' Both Wayne and Michael started at the bottom, going through every aspect of the business to learn what it is all about. My father told us, ''You must know how to do every job in the company; otherwise, it won't be a success.'' You can't tell someone what to do unless you have done it yourself.

What was your father's first arcade?

The Adventurers was my father's first arcade. He and my mom worked the business seven days a week. The arcade had *Pokerino, Skee-Ball,* rifle-shooting machines, and pinball—everything that was available in those days.

Describe the business today.

We have many different names today, but we mainly go under the name Amusement Consultants Ltd. While my dad was alive, we expanded to four arcades, plus we had machines in places like bowling centers. We didn't have so much a street route but games in larger arcades and bowling centers. When my brother and I finished school, we came into the business full time. We expanded the business beyond arcades and into the concessionaire business in amusement parks, operating arcades and carnival games. Today the business has locations in shopping malls, some of the games in bowling centers from years ago, and large arcades associated with restaurants like Nathan's. We have amusement centers of all types; we are still concessionaires at amusement parks in New York and Rhode Island, where we have a large carnival- game business. Ours is probably one of the only companies in the country that has expertise in all of these areas.

The Getlan family, (l-r): Michael, Wayne, Lynda, Ron, and Mel.

We have amusement facilities that have miniature golf and go-carts. We have an installation in Massachusetts that is a 35-acre, par-three golf course. It includes golf, driving, rides, batting cages, and an arcade. We are presently expanding our amusement operation Milford, Conn., which has pool tables, batting cages, miniature golf, and an arcade. We are going to add an indoor bumper car and electric go-cart track.

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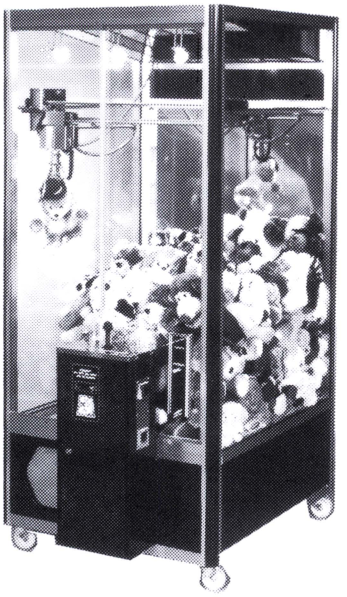

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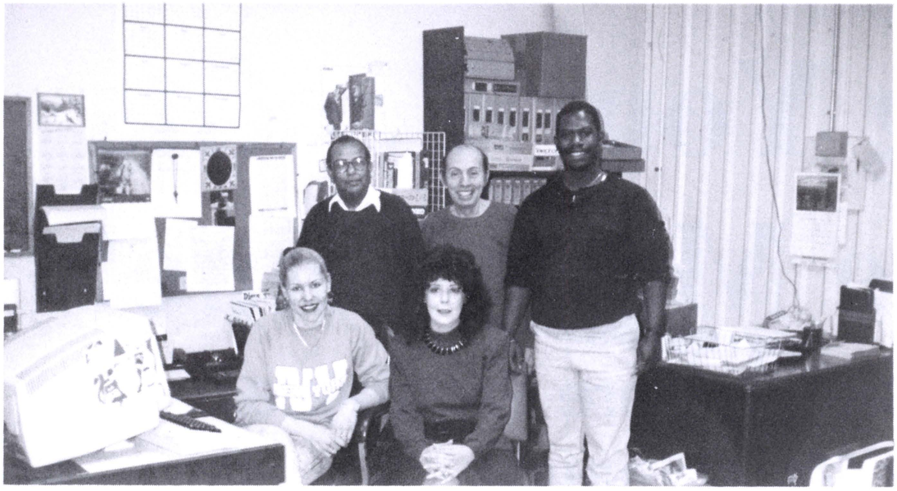

In the parts department are, (l-r): Sandy, Phil, Lynne, Vito, and Bruce.

"The major problem for our industry is that we have not been able to raise our price-per-play in 10 years."

A combination go-cart track and arcade recently opened in the New Orleans area. Is that a new trend?

Yes. To open what we call an "iron" park requires an investment in the millions of dollars. That's why it is very difficult today.

What is an "iron" park?

It's an amusement park with roller coasters and major amusement rides. It's difficult to open those today, so we are trying to open smaller, family-oriented amusement centers with something for everyone. Go-cart tracks combined with games is a hit with families. Besides go-carts, there's miniature golf, arcades—something for the whole family. Mom can play miniature golf while dad goes to the batting cages or basketball games. The kids can ride go-carts or play video games. That's what is happening around the country today.

Do you use redemption in many of your locations?

Most definitely. In many of our stores we have full redemption on *Skee-Ball, Pokerino, 21, Whac-A-Mole*—every kind of equipment that is available. We have token operations, cash operations—you name the variable and we operate it. We also operate remote control boats at Sea World.

How do you assess what you are going to expand into?

With our years of experience, we have people coming to us with ideas. We also look at opportunities to open new facilities based on the legislative availabilities in different towns. The economics in some towns doesn't lend itself to arcades. In some areas the land is so valuable that you would not be able to open a facility. You must have enough traffic to support a location.

We also buy places and expand them. One was a family-owned business. The owners retired, so we took the facility and expanded it. We look for situations where someone tried to do something but maybe couldn't go ahead because of capital or not knowing how to run larger operations.

Were there any ventures that looked good but didn't work out?

Not really. About the only thing was when we had concessions in amusement parks and they closed down. For example, Rockaway's Playland closed down when the land became too valuable to justify an amusement park. Another time, an amusement park closed and a shopping center was developed on the land for the same reason. It wasn't our fault.

Are video games still your top equipment?

The major equipment is video. I think the video equipment is a little lackluster right now. The industry needs some real R&D to come up with innovative things that can't be duplicated on TV screens at home. More sophisticated equipment is necessary to jar the imaginations of players. We could use more participatory equipment that offers players more than just standing with a joystick and button. This lack of innovation is why so many operators are going back to basics. In the '50s and '60s, we were running redemption. All of the old-time arcades ran *Skee-Ball* machines with merchandise. We somehow got away from it later on because we felt that the gross was higher. But today more merchandising has become necessary to bring the players back. I feel that the industry is cyclical. Now redemption is becoming important again.

I have been hearing that redemption is getting important.

It's a fact. I've heard it called the wave of the future, but we were doing it in the '50s! About 27 years ago we opened up an Adventure Land Amusement Park. We had redemption then, and it's remained there all of these years. Many amusement park operations have always had redemption and merchandising.

Do you have any of your video games with ticket dispensers?

Not really. We have not done that.

Do you think redemption is viable for smaller arcade operators?

It depends on how small of an arcade you're talking about. We have mall operations that have redemption. It all depends on the competition in the area and whether they are giving prizes. We have found that redemption is important now because with so many kids home with Nintendo and home computers, redemption offers the option of participatory play that they cannot get at home. The smaller kids, especially, are going home with something, and the older ones are saving for the larger prizes that a good operator will offer. You can't give the public junk. You must offer quality merchandise on the higher level and encourage saving coupons for it.

The merchandise display is important.

The office staff, (l-r): Josephine, Arnold, Josie, Marietta, Anna, Arlene, Lily, Maureen, Shirley, and Ed.

"There is a prohibition of arcades in many towns because of the non-professional arcade operators who opened up in the early '80s."

We also believe in selective merchandise buying. We recently had 20 of our people at the New York variety show specifically to buy merchandise. We buy everything from little spiders to televisions to offer a wide array in our redemption centers. Naturally, the bigger the arcade with more redemption equipment, the larger variety of prizes you can offer. We offer hard goods, like radios, can openers, cameras, Walkmans—a whole line of small electronics. In addition to low-value coupon merchandise, you must offer an incentive for customers to save their tickets. It's an incentive for them to come back and play again. You also must give a good percentage of return.

How do you figure the percentage of return?

In different games you can make adjustments based on what scores you set. For example, we give one ticket for everyone who plays *Skee-Ball*—no matter what score they get—because we set the first ticket to come out at 50 points. Well, with nine balls they have got to get 50 points. A lot of operators don't do that. They set it at 150 points to win the first coupon, which makes it frustrating for players. We believe in giving them a ticket at 50 points so everyone gets something of value.

What types of equipment lend themselves to redemption?

Skee-Ball, 21, Pokerino, and coin-op basketball. But it's important, no matter what type of equipment you have dispensing coupons, that it be reasonable. To simply have the game and not give out the merchandise, or not give a good percentage of return to the public for their play, is foolish. They are defeating their own purpose. Winning coupons generates more play.

Do you operate a lot of cranes?

Yes, we do. But that is another area of merchandising. Our cranes are set up in sections in each store. We have them divided by 25-cent or 50-cent play, featuring jewelry, merchandise, and single-bin items. In other words, one may be a complete one feature/one item bin. Others will have a mixture. But all the merchandise has to be placed carefully in the crane, not just thrown in. Some operators just dump a bag of stuffed animals in and walk away. We don't believe in that. We look for color, merchandising, setting up the cranes, and putting the animals in attractively.

Again, it is important to give a good percentage of return to the public. You have to make it so they have a chance to win, or you are defeating the whole purpose. The prizes must look good, fresh, and clean at all times and be attractive. This is a major point that many forget to do. A good operator has a fine redemption center, where the boxes are filled, the prizes are marked, and everything is clear. The same care has to be taken with cranes, also.

You mentioned home games earlier. How have home games affected your business?

I feel that the entire industry has negative or flat income levels because of home games. When I speak to others around the country, they all say that business has been off. They admit that the economy is good, but feel that there has been an impact from home games on our industry

Have you seen other situations in this industry over the years where something has affected it so greatly?

Yes. There was a big high in the early '80s when *Pac-Man* came out. Everything was very strong. Then business slacked off. But it did weed out all of the non-professionals that came into the industry at that time. They thought it was a get-rich-quick business, that all they had to do was put some games in a store and take home the money. After they got weeded out, there were still some down times, but then things came back.

The industry has fallen over the last couple of years for two reasons. First, there's been a lack of good product from manufacturers. The second factor is home game systems. Both have hurt our industry. The new pinballs are looking better than ever, but a lot of the video games have just been copycats of each other. And "expensive" is not a strong enough word! The good driving games cost $8,000 to $10,000. The major problem for our industry is that we have not been able to raise our price-per-play in 10 years. We are still getting 25 cents.

Do you have any of your machines on higher cost-per-play?

We try all new machines at 50 cents. But certain economic areas cannot support that. In the economic areas where I can, over half of the machines are on 50-cent

Back row, (l-r): Anophry, Raul, Tony, Dennis, Ivan, and George. Front row, (l-r): Kevin, John, Dave, and Jeff.

Mel and Ron's secretary, Ellie.

play. It works out well. Our computers watch the income on each machine and we review it on a weekly basis. Each machine is collected individually and has its own meter readings. All of the information is then compiled. Each arcade has a dollar level, and when a game goes below this level, it's reduced from 50 cents to 25 cents.

Many street operators feel that most of the new equipment is geared toward arcade operators. As an arcade operator, do you agree?

The larger pieces definitely are geared toward the arcades; they are not viable for street operators. I buy all of the bigger pieces. The problem, though, is that the prices of the games are out of whack. To spend $10,000 for a driving game makes no sense. But we do it because of a lack of product. I didn't buy a lot of them; I only bought a few. They are all copycat games. Where are the innovations? I'm not saying that I have the ideas, but that's not my job. I'll buy it if someone builds it. Where is the better mousetrap to earn us dollars? To switch income to the hot game from the weak game is not the ultimate goal of our business.

What about rotating games?

We are in the moving business. We have 10 trucks that move equipment five days a week. We have to rotate games more because of the lack of interesting pieces and to get the maximum life out of a machine. We try everything new. If the game is a 30-day wonder, meaning it didn't have lasting power, we then have to rotate that machine from arcade to arcade. I can do it, but many arcade operators can't do it logistically. I'm in the New York metropolitan area; I have arcades within a half hour of each other. So I have the ability to maximize the life out of my equipment. More urban or rural arcades don't have that ability.

Obviously, to rotate that often, you need quality construction on games. Do you find that?

Being a large operation, we have complete refurbishing facilities. We keep all of our equipment new at all times. If it gets beat up, we re-do it. Again, though, I am talking from a large operator's viewpoint. A smaller operator probably doesn't have the facilities we have. Our parts department is as large as that of most distributors in this country.

Do you buy through distributors?

Yes, I have to. That is the way that the system is set up. I can't buy direct from a factory. I buy a lot of equipment and it's all through a distributor. However, I am basically self-sufficient. I developed this over the years because no one could service me. The smaller operator must have the distributor as his friend. He can't afford to have an engineer in-house to do all of the board repair. I am, in reality, a distributor within my own company. All of the different stores call for parts and service from my facility.

When you are getting ready to buy equipment, do you have some sort of formula that you work by?

We try everything. We will put a game into a location, test it, and see how well it does. If it does well, we'll buy more of them. We talk to our distributor almost every other day to find out what's new.

You mentioned that in the early '80s there was an influx of nonprofessionals opening arcades. Do you see more professionals opening arcades today?

I don't think there has been a big expansion of arcades because of the legislative problems. Also, lackluster games and their income makes running arcades not very productive. The cost of opening an arcade is astronomical. With insurance, cost of location, cost of construction, and cost of operation, it is very difficult on 25-cent play. That's why, in my opinion, there has not been a major expansion of arcades.

Do you experience old feelings when you think of the influx of nonprofessionals in the early '80s?

Absolutely. The major expansion during the early '80s hurt our industry in the long run. Because of all of the unsophisticated people opening arcades, not knowing what to do, and letting them become hang-outs, our industry got a bad name. It made many cities and municipalities pass such negative legislation and licensing that it's become almost impossible to expand in certain areas. It was to the point where many towns completely outlawed the operation of coin-

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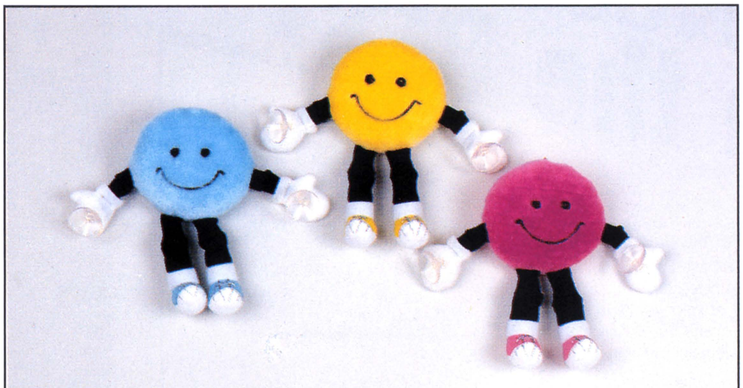

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operated amusement game rooms. A lot of those laws are still on the books, and the odds of getting them changed today are virtually impossible. I could name 10 towns right now where you can't operate an arcade. There is a prohibition of arcades because of the non-professional arcade operators who opened up in the early '80s. They have hurt our industry forever. Prior to that we could open up anywhere we wanted.

What are some "musts" for running a successful family amusement center?

We emphasize the word family. All of our arcades are attended by uniformed attendants who are there to service the customer with a smile and help them have a good experience. You must have proper personnel, cleanliness, machines that work, and equipment rotation. All are necessary for a successful operation. Unless you are in a transient location, you are basically servicing the same customers, so you must freshen up the equipment. Those customers are not going to play the same games day-in and day-out. You should also rotate the machines inside of the location, in addition to rotating from arcade to arcade, to give it a different look and keep it from stagnating.

Have you found operating game rooms in conjunction with serving food to be successful?

That's where our first business started—an association with fast food. We believe it is successful because an arcade usually is not a destination-bound location. So the association with a food facility allows parents to continue eating while children play.

Based on your experience, what do you see for the future?

That's a wonderful question. I wish I knew the answer! I think that everyone has to work hard, take care of the basics, and ride out the storm. I believe that the business is cyclical and will come back and be better again. Right now the business is down, and although I believe it will come back, it will take hard work. But most of all, we need the manufacturers to build a better mousetrap. We need product that you won't find in every home in America.

I'm sure the manufacturers don't want to come out with only copycat games. Everyone wants to have the next *Pac-Man*. Even *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* transfers income from other machines. We have one in every store, though. The more there are out in the market, the more the income dies down. It's a wonderful machine. I wish they would have 50 more that would keep up the income level. That's the problem—are we transferring income from one machine to the other, or are we increasing the gross of the arcade? Until we manage, through innovative equipment, to raise our grosses, we will continue to be in a slack period. ☐

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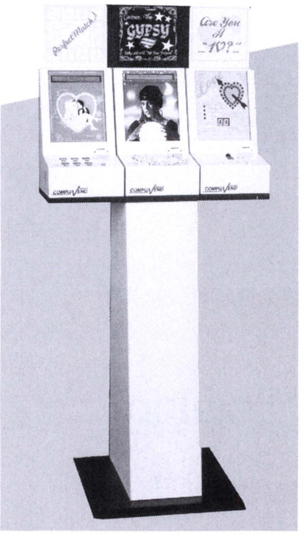

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ACME 90

Looking for fire in a smoke-filled room

Valerie Cognevich
Bonnie Theard
Chris Caire

It was cold, foggy, and rainy in Chicago for the fifth American Coin Machine Expo (ACME), held March 10-12 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Over 5,000 show attendees managed to put aside weather worries and memories of long airport waits as they traveled aisle after aisle of new equipment.

Operators always hope to find something that will put the pizzazz back into their businesses. They were busily looking for it at the show. They had a lot to choose from, but after touring the exhibit floor, they would only admit that there was some good product, not exceptional. One operator said, ''I've heard just about all the complaining I care to hear about video games. I don't think we can ever hope to see a game that will turn the industry around like *Pac-Man* did. I saw some pretty good games; I'm making out my list of what I'll buy. I never go to a show that I don't buy something.''

> *''Operators always hope to find something that will put the pizzazz back into their businesses.''*

Although most operators focus first on video games, it was evident at ACME that they were studying other types of equipment, especially redemption. ''I've faced reality with video games and know that I can't put all my eggs in the video basket anymore. I've been studying up on redemption and feel it just might be the way to go. There's certainly a wide array of equipment for it,'' noted an operator.

And there were lines formed in front of the latest pinballs. All of the pinball manufacturers had exceptional games.

But even with a lot of other product on display, no one can dispute the fact that video games still generate the most attention. We saw some low-cost kits and high-priced dedicated. Talk about technical advances—James Industries showed a new 33-inch medium resolution monitor in its suite. It represents a one-third increase in capability, providing crisp, sharp detail. Two years have been invested in development. Although operators were asking, ''How soon can I get it?'' Jim Roberts says it won't be available until the end of the year. Several video game manufacturers are rumored to be developing games specifically for this monster unit.

Video Games

Atari walked away from the show with two Play Meter awards and several others from AAMA in its newly established awards program. At the Atari booth operators played *Klax*, *FourTrax*, *Skull & Crossbones*, and *Badlands*.

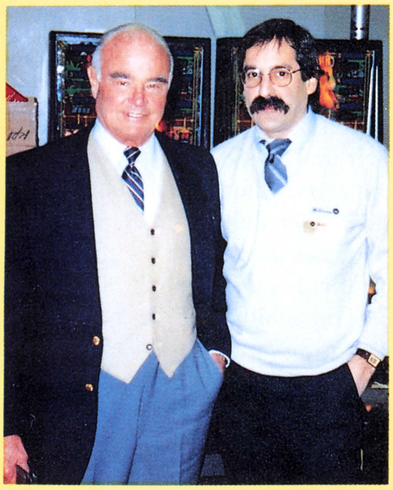
Klax is a simple concept and easy to play. Players try to catch the colored tiles with the paddle and flip them into bins to make same-colored stacks and rows of three. It is simultaneous two-player action with level select and add-a-coin features. It is available in standard upright, cabaret, and kit.

Skull & Crossbones is a swashbuckling adventure in a horizontal universal kit. The evil wizard robs two pirates of their booty; then the pirates swear revenge and embark on a quest to destroy the wizard and recover their treasure. The quest spans the globe as the heroes battle fierce captains and crews of opponent ships, and encounter soldier guards and a merciless executioner in a Spanish castle. On the beach, the pirates meet the dreaded Medusa and a horde of wicked skeletons that rise from the dead. The climax comes on the wizard's island.

Badlands, billed as the first universal driving game kit, is set 50 years after the first nuclear disaster. The sport of sprint racing is a ruthless battle between armed cars. The battles take place on tracks built in the ruins of the dangerous nuclear zones known as the badlands.

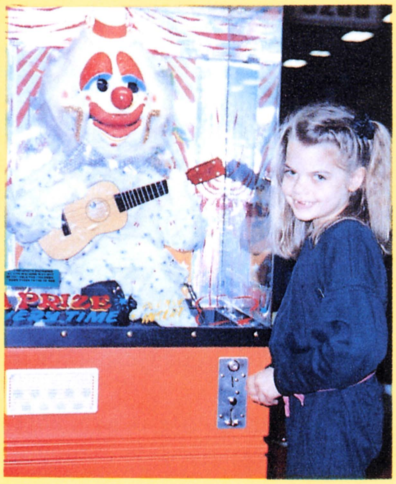
FourTrax, first shown at AMOA in September, features a deluxe motion simulation for side-to-side action in head-to-head ATV racing.

ACME 90

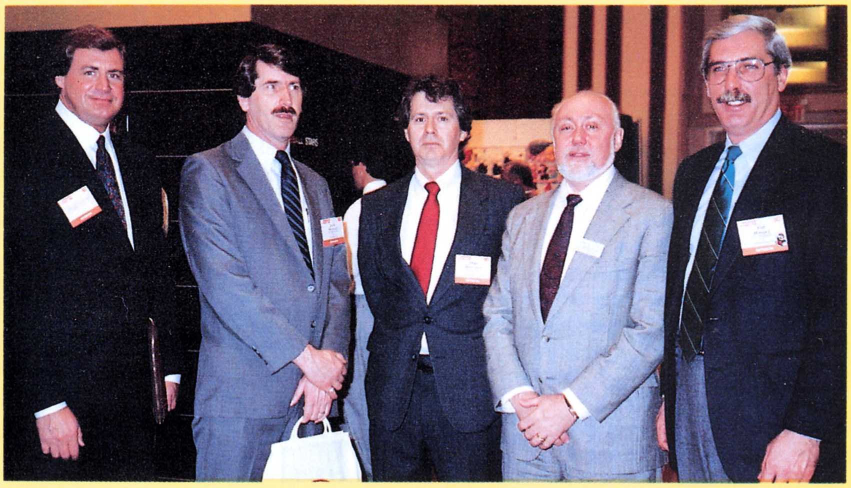


Louis Boasberg (l) of New Orleans Novelty Co. and Roger Sharpe of Williams Electronics.

At the Smart booth, (l-r): Nancy Singh, Jeff Smart, and Jeri and Larry Munson of L.D. Munson Assoc. in Anchorage, Alaska.

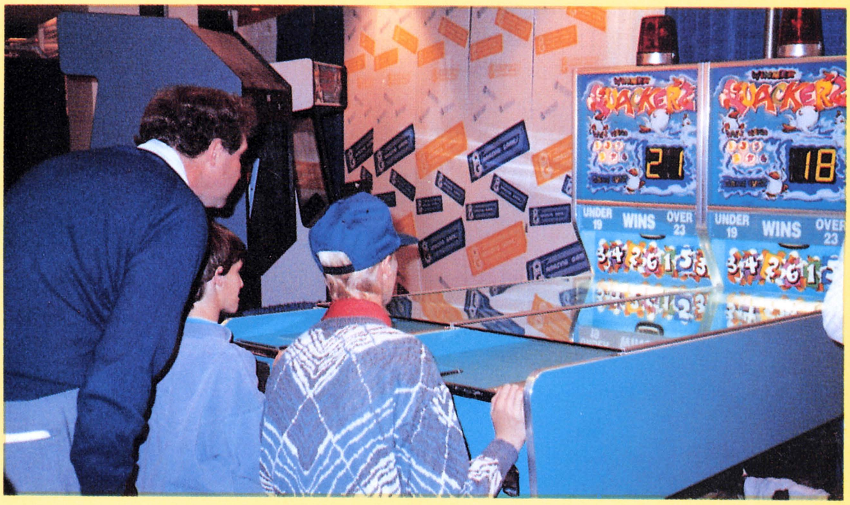


A pretty young lady tries for an egg capsule from Leisure Time's *Comic Clown*.



(L-r): Bill Kraft (Shaffer Dist.), Jack Silverest and Mike Harcourt (J&J Dist.), Ken Anderson (Leland), and Pat Harper (J&J Dist.).

Virginia Kauffman of Exidy welcomes Marty Foshee of Peach State Distributing.



Seidel's new *Quackers* roll down gained its share of family play.

ACME 90

Fabtek and Irem showed an impressive line-up of games, including *R-Type II, Sports Match, Dragon's Breed, Air Duel,* and *RaiDen.*

In Irem's *R-Type II*, the empire has revived, gained new power, and evolved in another dimension. To save the universe from fear and horror of the empire, mankind has dispatched a remodeled "R-9" to the front.

Air Duel has the player maneuvering his craft over a cityscape, shooting down enemy planes. It is a vertical, two-player kit scheduled to be out at the end of March.

If you liked *Tetris*, then Fabtek's *Sports Match* is the game for you. It's fast, fun, and easy to play. The player simply connects pairs of sports-related tiles in a straight line or with one 90-degree turn. The game is a horizontal kit that will fit conventional upright cabinets and most countertop and cocktail tables.

> ***"I've heard just about all the complaining I care to hear about video games."***

RaiDen is a vertical kit that has the player controlling a plane while shooting a myriad of targets. The game is scheduled for a later release.

Dragon's Breed captured the attention of operators with its challenging, yet fun, game play. Kayus became the king of the Agamen empire when he was just 15 years old. Those who were dissatisfied with his position conspired to break the seal, allowing the king of darkness, Zambaquous, to seize the kingdom with the black power. The young king must stop the overtake with the help of the dragon of light, Bahamoot.

MicroProse Games, already firmly established in the consumer market, introduced its first coin-op game, *F-15 Strike Eagle*. The game has wonderful graphics and offers the player multiple missions, six unique combat arenas, and multiple skill levels. The game is a realistic 3-D world with the player piloting a supersonic jet fighter into realistic turns, rolls, and loops. The game will begin testing around the end of May. Said Gene Lipkin, "Our reputation in consumer was built on game play. We will build our coin-op reputation the same way."

Data East introduced two new video games, *Two Crude* and *Vapor Trail. Two Crude* is an action-packed fighting game billed as the next *Bad Dudes.*

Vapor Trail, a shoot 'em up in an airplane game, is available as a dedicated or kit. Steve Walton said of the game, "It's not a $400 per week game, but it is a steady earner. Operators will see a good return on investment with this one."

Capcom had a strong showing with *Final Fight* and *Mercs. Final Fight* has made it to the top of Play Meter's equipment poll. The Mad Gear Gang has kidnapped Haggar's daughter, Jessica. The player must head to the streets for the final fight using fists, feet, knives, and Molotov cocktails to beat the gang. It is a two-player interactive game with Capcom's CPS super chip.

Mercs is a three-player interactive game on a giant 25-inch monitor. It is also produced on the CPS system chip. When asked which games they liked, operators consistently mentioned *Mercs.*

Leland offered a two-player version of its hit game, *Super Off Road.* One operator said, "Of all the games at the show, I think that this one is the best value for the money."

Leland also showed its *Track-Pak*, eight newly designed tracks that test every player's skill. Players can choose between a truck or a dune buggy. It also features a new and unique graphics presentation.

Sega had an impressive line-up, including *Galaxy Force, Alien Storm, Bloxeed, G-Loc Air Battle, Line of Fire,* and *M.V.P. Galaxy Force* gives players the "spin" of a lifetime as they experience the thrill of spaceship flight. Players become space pilots who guide their craft via skillful maneuvering with controls on the realistic control stick. The super deluxe model faithfully simulates the commands of the right-hand side control stick. The whole cockpit inclines 15 degrees in two directions and quickly turns 335 degrees to both the right or the left. It's available in upright, deluxe, and super deluxe models.

Alien Storm is an upright with a horizontal, 25-inch monitor and three sets of one joystick and three punch buttons. It is a three-player interactive game with a buy-in feature. It is the year 2002 when three employees of a neighborhood hot dog stand are called to duty when they hear broadcasts of an alien invasion. Their mission is to protect the citizens from the slimy aliens.

Players must arrange falling blocks into rows using a joystick and button in *Bloxeed.* As time periods elapse, the player is penalized with additional rows of blocks at the bottom of the screen. It is available as a horizontal kit.

G-Loc Air Battle is available in upright, cockpit, and deluxe (moving cabinet.) It features a 19-inch horizontal monitor, buy-in capabilities, and continuous play. The player must attack enemy aircraft in fast action, dogfighting tactics and destroy them before time runs out.

Line of Fire is available as a sit-down or upright. It has realistic 3-D effects housed in a sturdy cabinet. The player must break through the strong enemy line, capture the powerful machine gun, and return with it.

One or two players can enjoy baseball action on *M.V.P.* Players choose from the final game of the regular season, competing for the division pennant, the championship series, World Series, or All Star Game. It has detailed action, and home run replays can be viewed in exciting close-ups.

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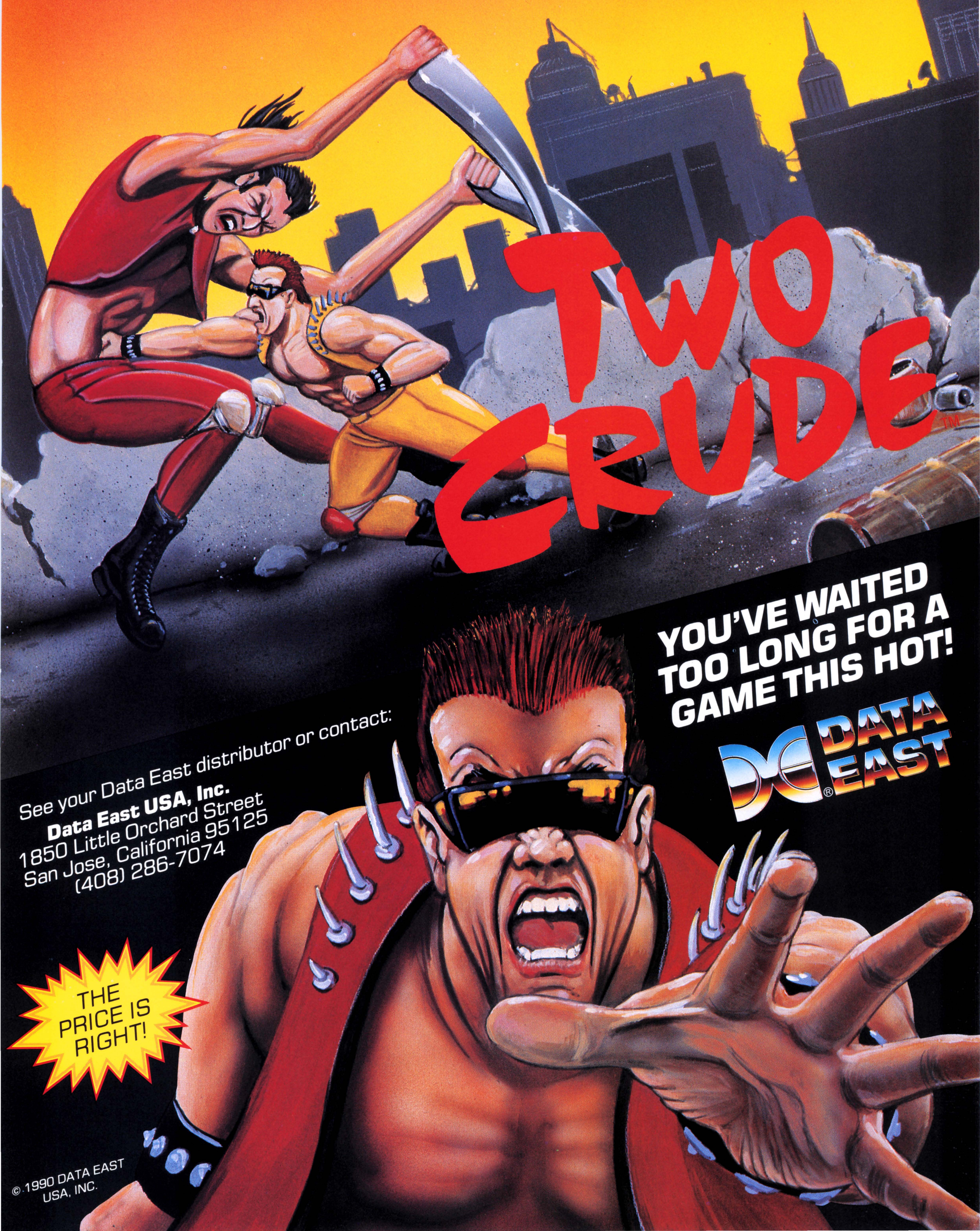

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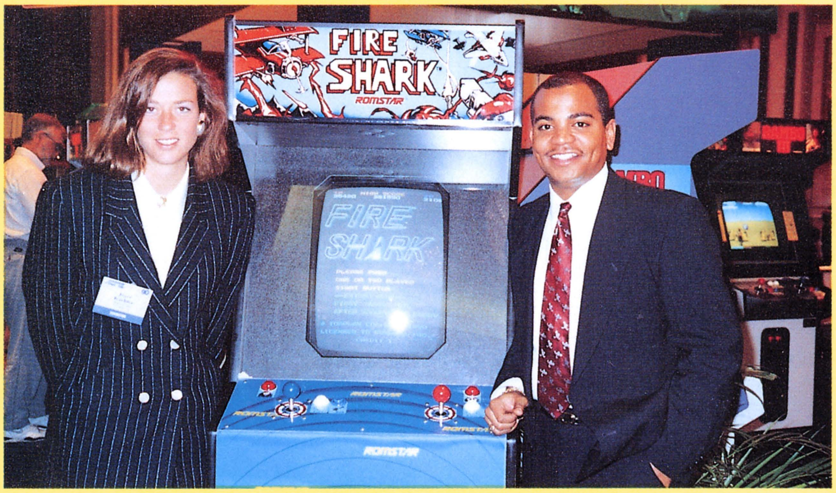
ACME 90

NEO-GEO
MVS
SNK

Play Meter's Valerie Cognevich and Ron Kogos at the SNK booth.

At the GameTek booth, (l-r): Don Barfield of Texas Amusement Games with GameTek's Ivan Rothstein and Leonard Traub.

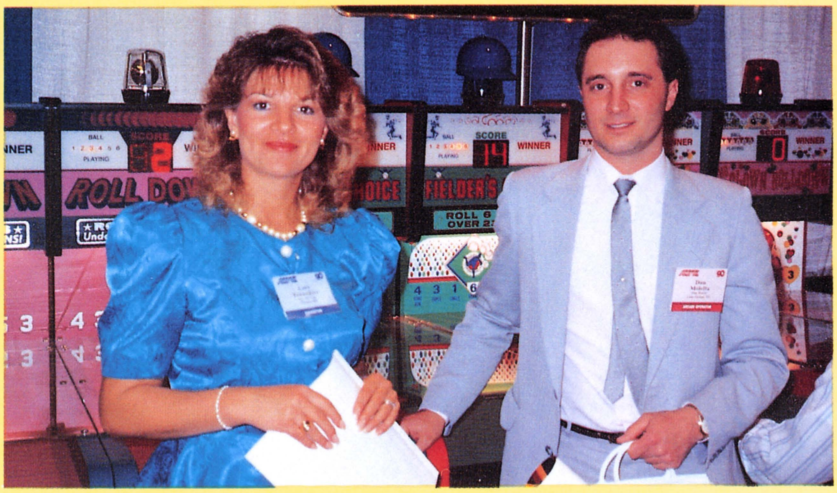
Brian Duke (l) with his bride, Emi, and Chuck Meline.


FIRE SHARK
ROMSTAR

Romstar's Joyce Kaehler and Tim Jackson with *Fire Shark*.

META FOX
I-VICS INC

I-Vic's Leroy Hancuff (l) with Music-Vend's Lamar Forque.


ROLL DOWN
FIELDER'S

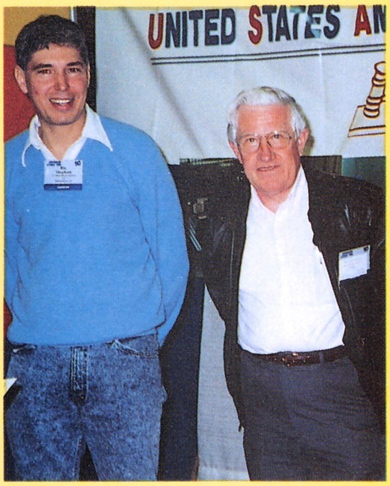
Lori Treankler of Bay-Tek and Don Molella of Fun World by the new *Fielder's Choice*.

ACME 90

At Konami's booth, (l-r): Marv Galante, Mike Kubin, Steve Bierrum, Steve Kauffman, and Frank Pellegrini.

Bob Harzer of SMS Mfg. and Tom Dunn of Tom's Amusement Co. by *Pop-A-Ball*.

Happy with *Neo-Geo*, (l-r), are SNK's John Barone, Neal Zook, Rachel Davies, Tracy Tate, and Sue Jarocki.



Ric Stephen (l) and Bill Meador of U.S. Amusement Auctions.

With *DJ Boy* in the American Sammy booth, (l-r): Dave Peckels, Terry Ishida (Hal America), Norman Evangelista, and Ko Adachi.

Fernandez Fun Factory's Warren Asing playing the latest Data East game.

ACME 90

Konami showed its mega-hit *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* and *Aliens*. *TMNT* has been out on location earning tremendous revenues.

Aliens has an impressive look with its header bearing the logo of the movie of the same name. It is a two-player, interactive, horizontal game with buy-in and continuation features. Konami takes players on a space adventure to battle menacing alien life forms. It has been 57 years since the last confrontation with the aliens on Acheron. Now their breeding grounds have been detected, and players must rid the settlement of the creatures. In addition to fighting existing aliens, players must also eliminate incubation rooms and hatching grounds while dodging fatal electric shock waves, barricades, stream blasts, and dripping alien acid.

A new company, I-VICS, showed its first game, *Meta Fox*. The game challenges the player to progress from Corsair jet to F-36 Sabre to FA-18 Hornet aircraft while avoiding a variety of assaults from all directions. Combat includes air to air, air to land, and air to sea. It is a two-player interactive vertical kit with continuation and buy-in features.

> ***"Although most operators focus first on video games, it was evident at ACME that they were studying other types of equipment, especially redemption."***

American Technos exhibited its two recent hits, *WWF Superstars* and *Block Out*. *WWF Superstars* is available as dedicated or horizontal kit. Players choose from eight dynamite wrestlers from the WWF, including Hulk Hogan, Honky Tonk Man, Big Boss Man, "Macho Man" Randy Savage and Ultimate Warrior, to name a few.

Block Out is easy to play but difficult to master. Players must arrange falling blocks to accumulate points. It is a 3-D mind teaser.

At the Midway Manufacturing booth players lined up to play the latest video, *Trog*. The game features Midway's exclusive method of animation called PLAYmation, which brings to life a colorful collection of Dinos and the wacky, one-eyed caveman, Trog. The Dinos think and feel for themselves. Without the player's guidance, this endangered species is apt to get stuck in tarpools, fall into bottomless pits, or walk off the edge of the island. The player must collect all of the Dino eggs and lead his Dino safely home. One to four players can play at once or buy-in on the action at any time.

Midway also showed *Tri-Sports*, which features Pool Shark, Power Strike, and Mini-Golf Deluxe. Pool Shark offers straight pool, rotation, and nine ball. Power Strike lets players choose from regulation, flash, and triple strike for their alley-action. Mini-Golf Deluxe lends a new twist to the typical miniature golf course action.

Chevalier International Trading Service introduced a new game from a French company, Sisteme, called *Ballarena*. It is a vertical kit for one or two players. It has eight difficulty levels and is a subtle mixture of break out and shooting games. It has bricks, monsters, bonuses, traps, friends, and enemies.

Strata featured *Golden Tee Golf* with spectacular 3-D graphics, creating an upscale country club atmosphere. It features three unique and challenging courses and is available as a complete horizontal kit.

Taito showed four games: *Cadash*, *Battle Shark*, *Special Criminal Investigation*, and *W.G.P.* (World Grand Prix.) *Cadash* is a two-player horizontal kit. A special feature of the game is the capability to hook two games together for four-player action. The player begins in the throne room where the king asks for help in rescuing the princess, who has been captured by the incarnation of evil, Barrog. Players select their characters from among the fighter, the magician, the priest, or the ninja. Each has its own unique capabilities, from attacking power to magic.

Battle Shark is a unique submarine adventure. The player becomes a submarine commander at the controls of a high-tech super sub. He must dive into enemy waters, blasting through scores of enemy craft attacking from every direction. *Battle Shark* features realistic submarine controls and sighting with a vibrating periscope during damage sequences.

Tony and Ray, two detectives with the Bureau of Special Criminal Investigations, are given the most important case of their lives in *Special Criminal Investigation*. A dangerous band of thugs has kidnapped the mayor's daughter, Jennifer, and is holding her in a warehouse hugging a time bomb. As the criminals are spotted the player must pursue them through a challenging array of obstacles.

W.G.P. is a fast-paced racing game available in upright and deluxe movable cabinets. The game is a sprint race of three laps. When the bike finishes the qualifying position and you are behind it, or when the player finishes three laps successfully, the game is over. Up to eight games can be linked together, enabling eight players to have simultaneous competition.

Premier showed a video game, *Exterminator*, available as a dedicated or a kit. The player is the bug man bound and determined to kill the critters. *Exterminator* was developed and manufactured in the United States. It has a buy-in and continuation feature, unique controls, and life-like graphics.

GameTek once again showed its hit game, *Wheel of Fortune*. It's available

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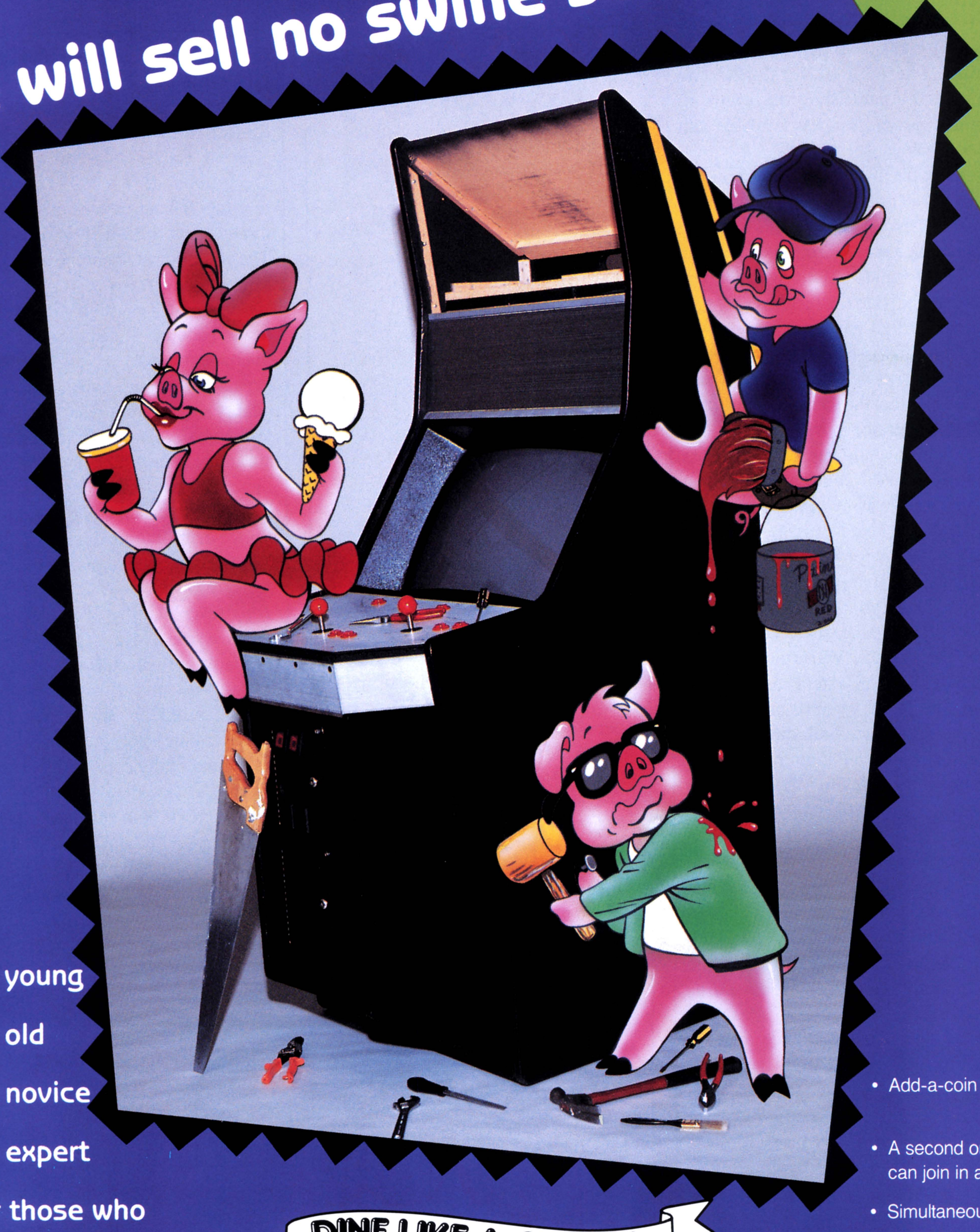

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THE LELAND CORPORATION 1841 Friendship Drive, El Cajon, CA 92020 (619) 562-7000 as an upright, countertop, or cocktail table. The official version of the popular TV game show that draws 40 million viewers, it is also available with a ticket dispenser.

One of the most fun games, shown at AMOA '89 in a suite, is Ameri Corp.'s *AmeriDarts*. It's available as a kit that adapts to either horizontal or vertical monitor formats. Along with the obvious theme, darts, it features adorable characters that taunt the player if he doesn't do his best and applaud when he does. The "no more of the same" company notes that the game was designed with the operator in mind.

Nintendo continues to prove its dedication to the coin-op market with an impressive array of titles available on its Play-Choice system. The company offers operators *Play-Choice* upright with five games and a single screen; the *Play-Choice* countertop, also with five games (perfect for bars); and kits for the VS. dual or table systems, the Unisystem, and *Punch-Out!*. There are over 40 games from which to choose, including *Double Dragon, Gauntlet, Super Mario 3, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Ninja Gaiden, Tecmo Bowl, Fester's Quest, Pin Bot,* and *Baseball Stars.*

Operators were again shown *World Cup '90*, Tecmo's video soccer game. The player is able to use all of the soccer techniques like sliding blocks, jumping blocks, diving head-shooting, and over-head kick. Additional coins lengthen the play time to make the match more exciting, since matches don't have to be called off in the middle of the action.

SNK introduced its new *Neo-Geo* system, which it will be selling exclusively. Its last dedicated game, *Search and Rescue*, and *Beast Busters* were also shown.

Search and Rescue features an interplanetary exploration vehicle that has vanished off its projected course. After a frantic search, a government investigation located the hull of the wrecked ship. Two men are sent down to investigate and determine the cause of the ship's disappearance. It's a moderately priced, two-player cooperative game with the works-in-a-drawer 19-inch cabinet.

VIDEO GAMES AT ACME '90

AmeriDarts/Ameri Corp.
DJ Boy/American Sammy
Block Out/Am. Technos
WWF Superstars/Am. Technos
Klax/Atari
Skull & Crossbones/Atari
Badlands/Atari
Four Trax/Atari
Final Fight/Capcom
Mercs/Capcom
Ballarena/Chevalier
Vapor Trail/Data East
Two Crude/Data East
Sports Match/Fabtek
RaiDen/Fabtek
Wheel of Fortune/GameTek
R-Type II/Irem
Dragon's Breed/Irem
Air Duel/Irem
Meta Fox/I-VICS
Big Run/Jaleco
Astayanax/Jaleco
Baseball game (untitled)/Jaleco
Soccer game (untitled)/Jaleco
TMNT/Konami
Aliens/Konami
Super Off Road (2-pl)/Leland
Track-Pak/Leland
F-15 Strike Eagle/MicroProse
Trog/Midway Mfg.
Tri-Sports/Midway Mfg.
Play-Choice/Nintendo
Exterminator/Premier
Rambo III/Romstar
Fire Shark/Romstar
Snow Bros./Romstar
Toaplan/Romstar
Caliber 50/Romstar
Galaxy Force/Sega
Alien Storm/Sega
Bloxeed/Sega
G-Loc Air Battle/Sega
Line of Fire/Sega
M.V.P./Sega
Air Buster/Sharp Image
Neo-Geo/SNK
Search and Rescue/SNK
Beast Busters/SNK
Golden Tee Golf/Strata
Cadash/Taito
Battleshark/Taito
Special Criminal Investigation/Taito
W.G.P./Taito
World Cup '90/Tecmo

Beast Busters was introduced in December at SNK's distributor meeting. It features three machine guns mounted on a 35-inch wide cabinet. The player must shoot the bad guys in a variety of screens.

The *Neo-Geo* system will be SNK's prime product. It contains fast 16-bit main microprocessor, expanded ROM capacity, exceptional graphics, CD quality sound, and advanced hardware test program. It is available with four or six games in one cabinet, depending on operators' needs. The header features a display for each of the games with fluorescent illumination behind each. The first games available are *Baseball Starts, Nam-1975, Magician Lord,* and *Top Player's Golf. Riding Hero*, a 3-D motorcycle riding game, will be available in June. As with any system, it is only as good as the games it has to offer. Paul Jacobs says, "We will be concentrating solely on this system. We are already fully committed to at least 23 games."

American Sammy had *DJ Boy* featuring Wolfman Jack, the famous disc jockey, as the voice on the game. Available as a two-player, horizontal kit, it's a light-hearted fighting game with the characters on roller skates. The cartoon characters fill the screen. Those looking for an inexpensive kit need not look farther than this. It's fun for all.

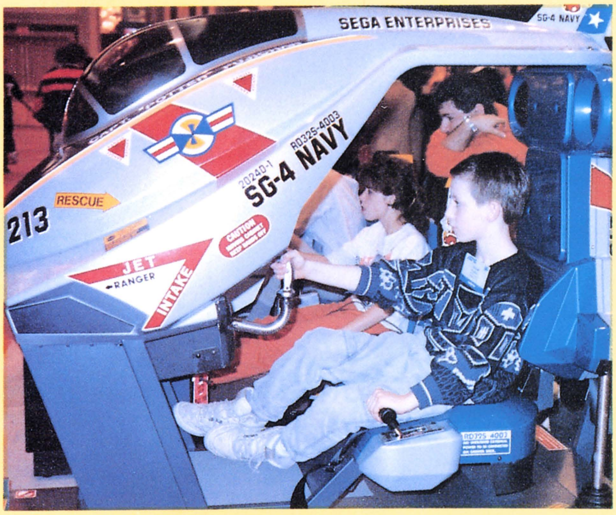
Romstar exhibited *Rambo III, Caliber 50, Toaplan, Fire Shark,* and *Snow Bros. Rambo III* lives up to its namesake's reputation as the player fights his way through obstacle courses. *Toaplan* is a game similar to *Sky Shark*. It is a two-player, vertical kit featuring two joysticks and two buttons. Players shoot targets on land and sea. *Caliber 50* is jungle warfare action in a one- or two-player vertical kit.

For those of you who have been kicking yourselves in the pants for not stocking up on *Bubble Bobble*, here's

ACME 90

FROG
Ymation!

Williams' Ken Fedesna (l) and John Blouin of James Industries.


SEGA ENTERPRISES
SG-4 NAVY
RESCUE
213
JET RANGER
INTAKE

Brad Fuller likes the action in Sega's new simulator game, *G-Loc*.

BOZO THE CLOWN
GRAND PRIX GAME

Kathy Acevedo of Yankee Games and Joe Serpico of Atlas Distributing/Chicago by *Bozo the Clown*.

BIG RUN
THE SUPREME 4WD CHALLENGE
JALECO

By Jaleco's *Big Run*, (l-r): Larry Berke, Darlene Lamz, and Abby Rubin.

BELAM
WINNING

At the Belam booth, (l-r): Randy Boreman and Barry Thompson with Simon and Bob Deith.

The Atari group, (l-r): Jim Newlander, Jackie Sherman, Mary Fujihara, Frank Cosentino, and Elaine Shirley.

ACME 90

Paul and Gail Biederman of Biederman Design Labs.

Michael and Diane Seibert of Design Plus show *Bozo Basketball* to Daryl Hayden of Putt Putt Golf & Games.

Boy, I'm glad it's over! Active's Dave Gilfor (l) and Chris Vecchione.

Kathy and Bob Kowaliki of Data East watch as their children Janet and Richie play *Wacky Gator*.

Taito's Jim Chapman (r) with Birmingham Vending's Al Toranto.

(L-r): In the Irem/Fabtek booth are Frank Ballouz, Max Fujimoto, Drew Maniscalco, Jeanne Ballouz, Mark Gavett, and Darlene Kindler.

ACME 90

Stan Jarocki (r) proudly introduces *Slick Shot* and design engineers Tom Kopera and John Kubik.

Pop-A-Shot's Clyde Male (l) and Ken Cochran.

Joel Portner and Gary Duboff of East Coast Designs flank Nick Cosentino of American Vending Sales.

Melvin Nadel and Linda Kneeley show their newest prize selections.

Nintendo's pride, (l-r): Steve Miles, Linda Webber, Kris Holley, Donna Hogin, and Matt Davison.

Matt Kelly of Lazer-Tron by the *Shuttle Launch* game.

the game you've been waiting for. *Snow Bros.* is a horizontal kit with 50 screens of competitive action. The player is a snowman who turns his bitter enemies into snowballs. He then propels these snowballs into other enemies. A direct hit turns the creatures into pies, cakes, or sushi rolls. The game is very appealing to all types of players.

Those that brought you *Sky Shark* and *Twin Cobra* now bring you *Fire Shark*. The player controls a fighter plane through 10 scenes to destroy the enemy's fortress. The player must destroy ships, tanks, and other obstacles before taking over the enemy territory. It is a vertical, simultaneous two-player kit.

Sharp Image showed *Air Buster* along with its selection of monitors.

Jaleco exhibited two previously shown games, *Big Run* and *Astayanax*, and introduced two new games, a baseball game and a soccer game, not yet named. Both feature realistic action. In the soccer game the ball is kicked from the side into the center of the screen. The baseball game features the opportunity to hit home runs. Larry Berke says that both games will lend themselves well to redemption.

> ***''There were lines formed in front of the latest pinballs. All of the pinball manufacturers had exceptional games.''***

Astayanax is a one- or two-player kit that takes the player on an adventure with ancient Greek warriors. Players travel through aged cities and caverns, palaces, and ruins to battle gargoyles, armed skeletons, two-headed dragons, winged warriors, and monsters too vile to describe!

Big Run takes the player on a dangerous road race, the infamous Paris-Dakar. It's available in custom compact upright, stationary sit-down, and movable sit-down. Players speed through hair-pin turns with a two-speed shifter from the Eiffel Tower to the finish line in Dakar, the capital of Senegal on the west coast of Africa.

One of the most impressive and different video games came from Grand Products. *Slick Shot* features an upright cabinet with a vertical monitor. A pool table is projected on the screen. To move the balls around, the player actually hits a real cue ball with a miniature pool stick on a small surface directly under the video screen, which is a real-life miniature pool table complete with covering and side rails. As the cue ball passes underneath the screen through an opening in the cabinet, the action reverts to the video screen. Realistic sounds and animated characters highlight the game. It takes up about as much space as a conventional video game (not including the space needed for the player to shoot the cue ball). The company touts it as a perfect street piece, and it comes with a bill acceptor.

Cabinets and Systems

While operators pondered over which of the many kits to buy, they could also buy a brand new cabinet for them. There were several companies exhibiting the latest in cabinet designs with various features.

Dynamo has paved the way for others in the cabinet market. The company has simplified buying cabinets; the operator tells Dynamo what size monitor, the material he would prefer, and Dynamo takes it from there with its Signature and Benchmark series of cabinets. The Signature series features a durable, oversized control panel, new economy monitors, new tilt-out monitor, and new monitor control position. The Benchmark series features all plywood front wall and floor, protective trim, up-front monitor control position, solid back panel, and one-piece wrap-around T-molding.

Both models have Dynamo's slide-out drawer and universal control panel.

KD Industries exhibited its *Excaliber video kit-kabinet*, billing it as ''the cabinet of the 21st century.'' It has interchangeable and replaceable panels and accommodates 19-, 25-, or 27-inch monitors, although it is only 3 inches wider than a conventional 19-inch video cabinet. It is lightweight quality plywood ideal for all street and arcade locations. It has a removable and interchangeable slide-drawer system, rear steel corner protectors and enclosed three-inch wheels.

East Coast Designs showed two models of cabinets, the *UV* series and the *Poker Style*. The *Poker Style* accommodates 13- or 19-inch monitors with no rear extension. It has a carriage bolted steel frame and rear door for easy access. It features a slide-out drawer with quick change control panel.

The *UV* series is available for either a 19- or 25-inch monitor. It is melamine laminated fiberboard with ''Lift and Lock'' slide out drawer, interchangeable components, tubular steel inner frame, and nine-inch deep control panel.

R.H. Belam showed the *Belam Grand* cabinet, the *Belita Santa* cabinet, and the *Mega-Tech* system. The *Belam Grand* features 3/4-inch plywood with tongue and groove construction, a 19- or 25-inch monitor, four-position monitor display works-in-a-drawer, tempered monitor and marquee glass, metal fluorescent light assembly, speaker, rear wheels, and steel leg levelers.

The *Belita Santa* cabinet is a universal video cabinet in sitdown or upright configuration for one or two players. It features a 33-inch monitor.

The *Mega-Tech* system comes complete with eight game titles, including *Super Thunder Blade, Altered Beast, Space Harrier II, Out-Run, Shinobi, After Burner, Great Golf*, and *Alien Syndrome*. There are over 10 more

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games coming soon. The system features a dual monitor display, electronic coin handling, full front access, remote frontal monitor adjustment, full bookkeeping and diagnostic program, and 16-bit graphics and animation.

Grand Products showed its *Universal Video System* featuring 3/4-inch plywood cabinet with tongue and groove construction, a universal mounted 19- or 25-inch monitor, works-in-a-drawer, tempered monitor and marquee glass, monitor bezel, metal fluorescent light assembly, speaker, over/under coin door and cash vault (with acceptors), rear wheels, and steel leg leveler plates with four leg levelers.

Amazing Games showed its all-plywood game cabinet with laminated plastic finish, Wells-Gardner universal color monitor, plywood slide-out conversion drawer, coin door with meter, cashbox and enclosures, high quality wiring harness, isolation transformer, metal control panel positioned for one- or two-player diversity, and plastic overlay for control panel.

Jaleco exhibited its unique *Lo-Pro* cabinet. Arcade operators love this cabinet because of its size (it stands just four-feet high). It can be placed in the middle of the arcade and supervisors can see over them. The *Lo-Pro* is available for a 19- or 25-inch monitor. Both models come with a Wells-Gardner monitor with the neck guard and up-front monitor adjustment controls in the drawer. It comes with a horizontal and vertical overlay for the monitor, which converts easily by just removing four bolts. The works-in-a-drawer has two control panels for one or two joysticks, and blank control panels are available for track ball use. All conversions can be done from the front.

> ***"Talk about technical advances—James Industries showed a new 33-inch medium resolution monitor."***

Pinballs

Some manufacturers may have complained that their booth traffic was less than hoped for. You won't hear any of that from the four pinball manufacturers—Data East Pinball, Williams Electronics, Midway Manufacturing, and Premier Technology/Gottlieb. Each had good crowds for all three days, further supporting the claim that in its 60th year, "pinball is back."

Data East Pinball's latest entry, *The Phantom of the Opera*, drew raves from operators for game play, sound, and art work, the latter courtesy of renowned pinball artist Paul Faris. In addition to the patented solid-state electronic flippers, *Phantom* has such features as an organ door that, when activated, uncovers the Phantom's hiding place for multi-ball play; a "Magic Mirror" that advances the bonus multiplier when a ball vanishes into it; and an unmasking of the Phantom, revealing his true, ghastly face. The coin doors and validators come from Coin Controls.

A *Phantom* game incorporating Bose speakers, which produced even better sound, was also on display. Look for this feature in future games.

Data East also exhibited its "brainwave" pinball, something the company came up with while working on the solid-state flipper, said game designer Joe Kaminkow. Still in the prototype stage, the pinball has flippers that are literally operated by the player's mind. Wearing a headband, the player thinks "right flipper" or "left flipper" as the ball approaches. His hands never touch the machine. As one would imagine, much concentration is required.

There was the usual buzz of activity at the booth of pinball kingpin Williams, caused this time by its new pin, *Whirlwind*. The company can always be counted on to deliver an unconventional pinball twist, and it did so again by mounting a special wind-making fan on top of the machine. Also, players can compete to see if they might be crowned "Grand Champion," an attraction recognizing the machine's all-time highest scorer. It's operator-resettable only through the game's diagnostics, a feature that can be used for location contest promotions.

Other features include the playfield action of three counter-rotating spinning discs, six powerful jet bumpers, and blustery animation; a new "Million Plus" three-ball "Multi-Ball" reward that progressively increases to score two million points the first time, three million points the next time, and so on; and a backbox displaying "Super Cellar Door Value" that offers seven distinct bonus rewards, including a chance at "Quick Multi-Ball" and unlimited million point scoring.

Also, Williams again displayed its shuffle alley, *Shuffle Inn*.

Midway Manufacturing Co., which wowed AMOA '89 with *Elvira and the Party Monsters*, had operators excited again at ACME with *The Bally Game Show*. The backglass is highlighted by game show emcee Keith McTeeth, who's joined in the game by contestants Candy Fluffhead, Mrs. Jeri Tol, I.V. League, and Alvin Pencilneck. The four compete for the game show's stupendous prizes.

Game play includes spinning the Big Wheel for 5,000 to 50,000 points, or, when the "nudge" is flashing, point bonuses and an extra ball; placing a ball into the drop hole, behind the car target, yields 100,000 to one million points; and a potential grand prize of three million points that flashes at the start of the multi-ball "Showcase Bonanza."

Premier showcased two pins, *Silver Slugger* and *Lights...Camera...Action!*. A futuristic sports game, *Silver Slugger* features a baseball diamond on the playfield and backglass. There's multi-ball play, dual game scoring,

ACME 90

BALLARENA
CONTROLS

Mirielle Chevalier with the French game, *Ballarena*.

RACKBALL CONTROLS
ILLUMINATED PUSHBUTTON CONTROLS
JOYSTICK CONTROLS

Zalmen and Mira Shlyonky of Color Wheels Electronics (Canada) line up with Happ Controls' Kerri Hedrick, Frank Happ, Sue Happ, and Dennis Sitcler.

QUALITY PLUSH
JEFFERSON, LA

George Snyder of Quality Plush and Roger Brown of Starcade Amusements ask, "What's up Doc?"

ACE Novelty Co. Inc.

Checking out the Ninja Turtles are Ace Novelty's Arleen Morgental, Berta Herrera, and Rorie Keller with Charlie Zeni of Putt-Putt Golf & Games.

Lil Baskin and Sharon Baskin of Baskin Sales visit with H. M. S. Monaco's Ira Erstling.

Touch the Screen!
Touch the Screen!
Snappy Stickers

Jerry Evers of Profitable Games shows off the *Snappy Stickers* machine.

ACME 90

Andy Berglund of KD Industries.

In front of Pioneer Laser Entertainment's *Laser CD* jukebox, (l-r): Steve Rogers, Paul Scribner, Hank Tronick of C.A. Robinson, and Jerry Sheaks.

Kris Taulbee and Jeff Siegel (rear) of Fun-N-Games sample the action on Midway Manufacturing's *The Bally Game Show*.

A battery of players on Data East's "horrifying" new pin, *The Phantom of the Opera*.

Stephen Devlin (l) and Bob Wiles of L.A. East Inc. amid the company's speaker systems.

Mike Holl of Erickson & Holl Amusements (c) listens to the sound of Carson City Mfg.'s *Star Cruiser* CD jukebox with the company's Donna Braun and Paul Harmon.

ACME 90

F-15 STRIKE EAGLE

"Wild Bill" Stealey (l) and Gene Lipkin with Micro Prose's new game, *F-15 Strike Eagle*.

Lauran Bromley with her new game, *Little Pro*.

At the Wico booth, (l-r): Mike Rudowitz, Frank Fortunato, Mike Burn, and Ralph Orlowski.

SNK's Kazuo Arai (l) and Paul Jacobs with the company's new system, *Neo-Geo*.

SLICK SHOT
GP
GRAND PRODUCTS
SLICK SHOT

Larry and Jim Corso of Juke Box Etc. sample *Slick Shot* by Grand Products.

Dynamo's Damon Paramore (yes, that is him sporting a new look!) with his wife Lisa.

multiple game-play modes, and—for redemption purposes—pre-wiring to allow for a ticket dispenser.

The price of the game has been reduced considerably, due to ''manufacturing efficiencies and design efforts,'' according to president Gil Pollock. In fact, *Silver Slugger* is the first in the company's line of ''SL'' series pins, designed specifically for street locations. These games will be less expensive and simpler in design, therefore simpler to play. This efficient design philosophy eliminates ball hang-ups and mechanical failures, Pollock added.

LCA boasts such innovations as flood lights, player-interactive lightbox animation, and a rotating playfield. The gun-fighting action also features ball jets, automatic skill levels for the novice/average/advanced player, and a new electronics package.

All of the pinball manufacturers have implemented the following price settings for these games: one play for 50 cents, two plays for 75 cents, and three plays for $1.

> ***''Each of the pinball manufacturers had good crowds for all three days. Pinball is back.''***

Jukeboxes

The jukeboxes on display mirrored the goings-on in the record industry itself: CDs are in, vinyl is out...or barely surviving. While vinyl-only jukebox operators still have product from which to choose, the lion's share is devoted to dedicated CD or CD/vinyl combo units.

Rowe International had plenty of product to exhibit, but the focus was on the *DanceStar*. Operators hook a hideaway box to a Rowe CD box for non-stop CD music. As one song fades out, another one begins—giving operators a viable weapon against DJs and their continuous music. Rowe's Joel Friedman said the *DanceStar*, which is in its final stages of testing, has produced ''great reports from the test locations. It'll be ready soon.''

The company also showed its *CD Nostalgia* (the body is built by Antique Apparatus), *LaserStar, Laser WallStar, CD Hideaway, RoweStar*, and CD/video jukebox. The latter holds 20 CDs and 40 videos.

Antique Apparatus, manufacturers of arguably the most beautiful jukeboxes in the industry, exhibited *The Gazelle*. It features art deco fawns playing the pipes of Pan and two leaping gazelles etched in mirrored glass panels. The gazelles are illuminated with changing colors, along with the four bubble tubes running the length of the side columns.

The company also produces *The Bubbler* and *The Peacock*, replete with peacock plumes that change color. The ''guts'' in all of these jukeboxes consist of Rowe's 200-Selection Stereo System.

Pioneer Jukebox, a division of Pioneer Laser Entertainment, exhibited the *Laser Juke CD Jukebox*. Though introduced at AMOA '89, the unit wasn't ready for shipment until this March show. (The *Laser Juke LaserDisc* will be launched this summer).

PLE is providing distributors with exclusive software packages that feature current hits, traditional ''evergreen'' or old favorites, and holiday gems. Each disc contains 15 songs. Also, to introduce its CD jukebox, the company is offering operators a free CD changer—valued at $400—with every initial Pioneer jukebox purchased through an authorized distributor. The offer ends June 15.

Carson City Mfg. showcased its line of vehicle-inspired jukeboxes: the *SongBird*, housed in the tail section of a '57 Thunderbird; the *Star Cruiser*, designed for locations with nautical motifs; and the *Country Classic*, a pickup truck-designed box that's ideal for truck stops and C&W bars. Each jukebox is available with either a 45 rpm or CD music system. (Note: The company's *Juke Jock* unit should be ready this summer. It's a jukebox incorporated into a large tennis shoe design; no kidding!)

NSM/Loewen-America again featured its *CD Fire*, a 100-CD wall phonograph that utilizes the ''Hyperbeam'' system. Operators can pre-determine the maximum number of songs that can be played on a disc before other patron-selected music is played. Also controllable is the length that any selection can run; when the limit is reached, the song fades out instead of ending abruptly.

The company's *CD Caravelle, CD Fire Stream,* and *CD Galaxy* were also shown.

Micro Manufacturing unveiled its entry into the CD jukebox sweepstakes, *Route 66*, a unit manufactured by the British firm Sound Leisure. Among the features are a universal credit unit; the ability to interface with up to three Sound Leisure CD wallboxes; a two-tiered data retrieval system; stereo or mono amplification; a 66-disc display; and background music facility with coin override and real time clock control.

The unit, which is being shipped now, will likely undergo a name change, according to Micro's Mark Brown. A nostalgia box and a smaller wall version of *Route 66* should be ready in four to five months, he added.

Rock-Ola displayed its all-CD *Laser 2000*, a unit the company introduced at AMOA '89. It holds up to 100 discs and has 280 watts of total output. Also exhibited was the *CD/45 Combo Model 498CDX*.

Seeburg again showed its line of *Laser Music System* CD jukeboxes. A new volume of its ''Hot Hits'' CD is now available, featuring titles from such artists as Eddie Money, Richard Marx, Elton John, Gloria Estefan, Tom Petty, and Milli Vanilli. The disc is ideal for locations that request more single hits; a new volume should be

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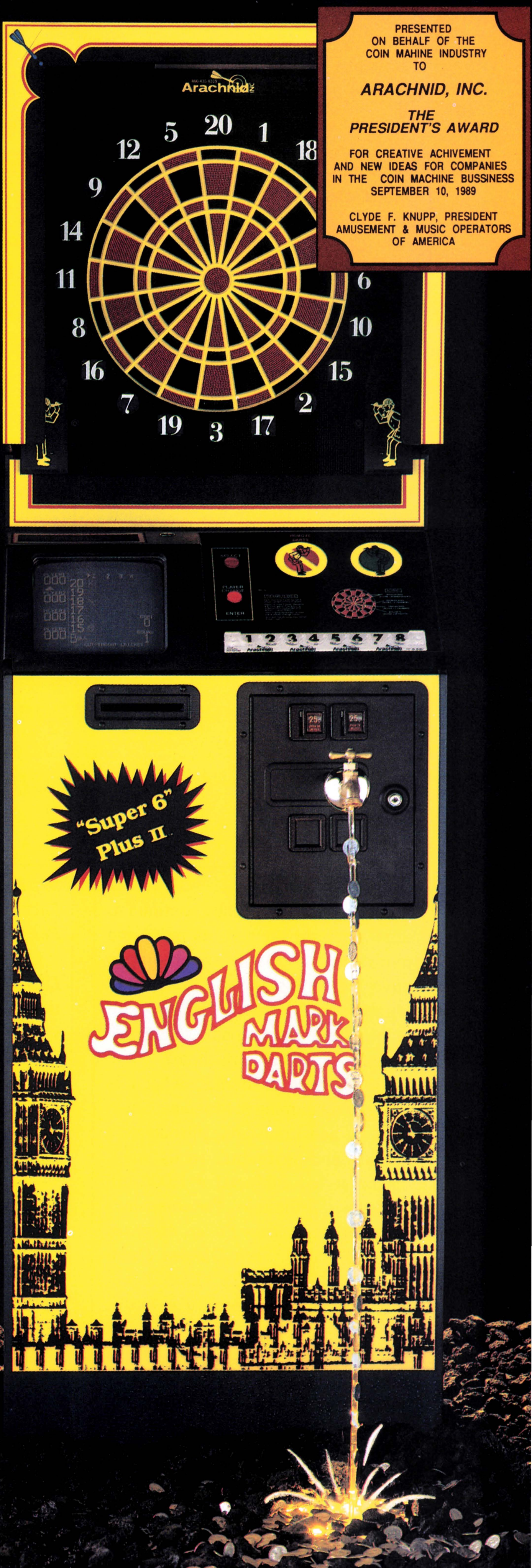

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Deutsche Wurlitzer GmbH exhibited the nostalgia box *One More Time*, the *CD Carnegie, CD Hideaway, Lasergraph Video Jukebox, Make My Music*, and *SL 600*.

Finally, LA East, providers of jukebox peripheral equipment, displayed speaker systems at its booth. The company is an exclusive distributor or representative for over 200 manufacturers, including JBL and Sony. The most interesting product at the booth was the SD Series of ceiling loudspeakers. They utilize suspended ceiling tile technology prevalent in today's building environments. The speakers' dispersion pattern reduces the need for additional speaker installation.

> **''While vinyl-only jukebox operators still have product from which to choose, the lion's share is devoted to dedicated CD or CD/vinyl combo units.''**

Video Pokers

Video poker machines continue to draw operator interest, as more and more state associations are pushing to have legislation passed that would legalize them. Based on how well pokers are doing in Montana and South Dakota, who can blame them?

SMS Manufacturing, which is licensed for gaming in Montana, South Dakota, and Louisiana, introduced a patent-pending feature to its steel, casino-styled cabinets: a 1,000-bill stacker *inside* the units. The company's booth featured *Draw Poker, Montana Draw Poker, South Dakota Draw Poker, South Dakota Video Keno, Bayou Bingo*(Louisiana), *Top Draw*, and *Video Pull Tab*.

Merit Industries unveiled two new video pokers, each housed in metal and chrome cabinets with a slot machine design: *Montana Superstar* and *Dakota Superstar*. Also exhibited were the company's reliable older pieces: *Pit Boss Superstar, Riviera*, and *Keno Superstar*.

U.S. Games raised the curtain on its *Pot-O-Gold* video pulltab for the South Dakota lottery and Indian reservations. It can be made to feature either fruit symbols or Indian-motif symbols, depending on the location. *Pot-O-Gold* wasn't complete at the show, but production will start in early April. The company's *Dakota Poker* for South Dakota began being shipped in March, as did the updated, 18-games-in-one *Super Duper Casino* countertop.

Micro Manufacturing showed its *Lucky 8 Lines*, which features a Wells Gardner 13-inch or 19-inch monitor, a Mars $1/$5/$10/$20 bill acceptor, and a full one-year warranty. Micro's family of video pokers also includes *Lucky 89, Lucky 85, Lucky 55, Lucky 77, Lucky 75, Turbo Joker Poker, Turbo Poker II*, and *Classic Joker Poker*.

Grayhound Electronics offered its *Lucky 8 Liner* in a variety of configurations. Operators can get it in a 19-inch upright cabinet by itself, in a ''2 for 1'' combination with *Super Trivia* in a single cabinet, or as a kit. The company also has *Lucky 8 Lines Hi-Lo Double-Up* in coin-op or non-coin-op versions; *Super Poker* in upright or countertop, with horizontal and vertical kits available; and *Atlantic City*.

German coin-op giant Stella International showed *Jolly Poker* in its booth. It features five full decks of mechanical spinning cards, including the jokers. There are three levels of play to challenge the player's skill: beginner, professional, and master. The game automatically rewards the player as his skill level increases. With each progression, the game becomes more difficult. There's also a double-up feature and operator-controllable dip switches.

This unit, as well as future Stella product, will be available through Dynamo Corporation as a result of the two companies' recent formation of a joint venture. Stella's product will be blended into Dynamo's product line and sold as such in the United States. Dynamo will also, in the near future, assume the manufacturing of Stella's U.S. product and lend market assistance.

Coin Concepts displayed *Five Card Draw* and *Lotto Fever*. *Five Card Draw*, a skill stop game with hold capabilities, has such features as adjustable award percentaging; on/off Hi-Lo; ticket/token award (extra large capacity), and adjustable pricing to $1, 10-cent or 25-cent option. *Lotto Fever*, available in dedicated or kit form, offers multi-coin play; a Hi-Lo feature; and high score or ticket/token awards metered.

Tekbilt exhibited its *AT5100-TV Game System*. Utilizing a 19-inch color TV, the system allows the user to switch from game play to regular TV via a remote. Tekbilt also introduced its *Powerhouse* cabinet assemblies for poker or 8-line games. They are available in upright or countertop (*Lil' Powerhouse*).

Omni showed *Strip Poker*, a real photograph of a woman stripping. It's available in either upright or kit form; the former offers a Wells Gardner monitor, bill acceptor, and easy dip switch settings. The company also has a system that, with the push of a button, can transform amusement games into video slot games. It's ideal for the operator with younger clients during the day and adult clients at night.

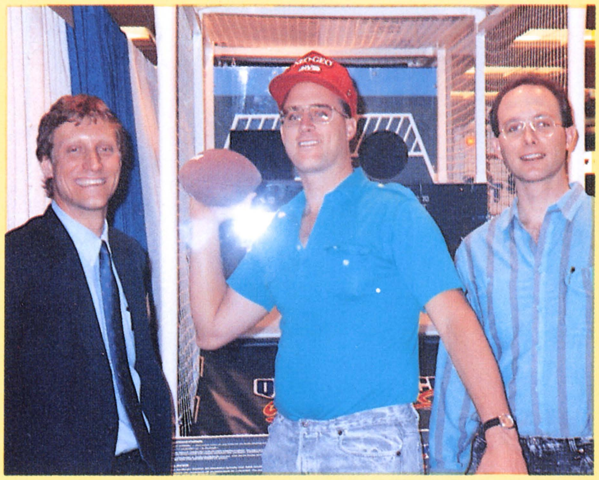
Kramer Manufacturing had an assortment of video pokers from which to choose. The new *Jackpot Bonus* offers an instant double bonus game and a 500-point jackpot for four deuces (adjustable). The company also showed *Riverboat Poker, High Speed Bonus*, and *Draw Poker*. All of the models have a ticket-dispensing option. In addition, Kramer offers *Kramergame* conversion kits for a host of card

ACME 90

Bob Hansen of Atlas Distributing/Chicago and Lucy Criticos of Merit by the *Dakota Superstar*.

From left: Arachnid's Sam Zammuto and active darters Mike Reynolds, Jim Richardson, and Mark Waddle of Pin Pete Co. by the *6300T*.

Crystal and Adam Siemieniec play Altec's *Ye Olde Gift Shoppe*.

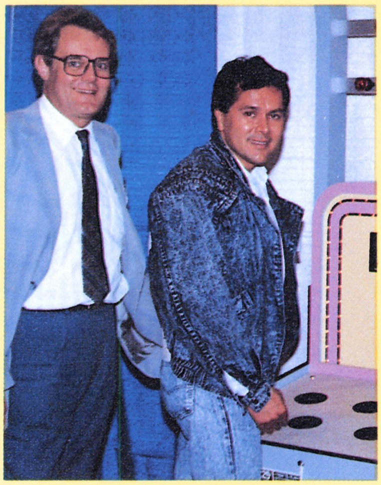


Kim Cook (l) of Intermark with attendees Gary and James Gilbert of Huddler Enterprises.

Sara Bagnola is drawn to the action in Romstar's *Rambo III*, debunking the idea that women don't like combative games.

Guy Sutton (l) of International Theme Park Service gets tips on Rough Rider from Larry Thatcher of Vari-Tech.

ACME 90



Bob's Space Racers' Jerry Weiman with Jesus Garcia of Mexico.

IMPRESSMENT PLUS INC.
CRYSTAL LAKE, IL

Jim Tierney of Wico checks out the latest with Impressment Plus owners Mary Lou and Gene Coughlin.

SURE GRIP
FIREFLY
Candy Cane
SPARKLE
THE BULL STARTS

Ray Rupp of Associated Vending with Great Lakes Dart's Marilyn Hempel.

Power House
'His' and 'Hers'
Strength Tester
OUR
Love Meter
TALKS!
REBOUND
SEGA

The busy Coin Concepts booth has Rhonda Fletcher and Art Warner surrounding Alan Newell and Chuck Peitz of Tri-Corp. Amusements.

Tom Edwards of The Game Exchange and Acme Premium's Susie Fennel.

Williams
ly Midway
vice ot.

The Williams and Bally/Midway service group, (l-r): Steve Trylbula, Greg McKay, Tom Cahill, Pat Riley, and Bill Fry.

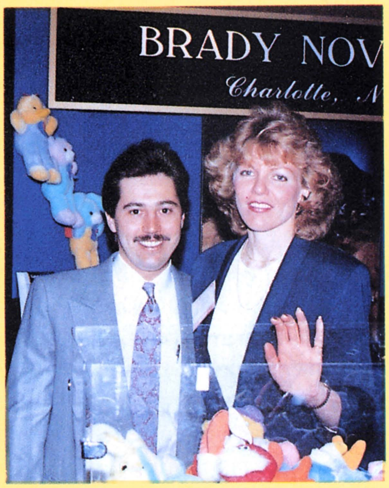
ACME 90

DAN BRECHNER & CO
FLORAL PARK, NY

From left: G.G. Tortirich and Jay Rubinstein of Dan Brechner, Steve Shryack of Elitch Gardens Amusement Park, Rich Babich of Colorado Game Exchange, and Werner Heymann of Dan Brechner.

Brian Veatch and Ken Shaffer of Carousel Industries with Brian Burginer (whose dad is with Diamond Jim's).

The Dart World bunch, (l-r): Ed Buttermore, Don Amirault, Ron Maple, and Mark Amirault.


BRADY NOV
Charlotte, N

Shane Overcash and Chris Brennen of Brady Novelty.

PLUSH-4-PLAY
HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA
1-800-25-CENTS

From left: Kevin Coy of Amusement Games Mgt., Joe Bates of Plush-4-Play, Hank Rice of Amusement Games Mgt., and Valerie Braban of Plush-4-Play.

MARS ELECTR
internat
Mars Electronics'
Stacker Bill Accep

Bart Shuldman of Mars Electronics.

games.

Quantum Industries (formerly Status Games) exhibited its Montana-approved *Montana Draw Poker*, with large color graphics, dual coin chutes, and complete software and hardware bookkeeping. It's available in a solid wood upright or a metal countertop. The company also showed *Casino Strip* in upright or countertop, *Poker*, and the 12-games-in-one *Pick 'n Play*.

Big Ten Electronics displayed *Draw 88 Poker* and *Reno Classic*. Altec featured the video poker games *Hold Um* and *Hold Up* in a sit-down cabinet. Entertainment Enterprises showed *Hi-Lo Double Up Joker Poker*.

Table Games

There wasn't much new in table games at ACME, but then again, this category offers reliable earnings over the long-haul. It isn't necessary to release new product at every show, unlike video games or pinball machines.

Valley Recreation Products introduced the new *Leopard* pool table, which gives operators a choice between rack play or time play. When the electronic controls are set on rack play, the operator can select the cost per rack or game—from 50 cents on up, in 25-cent multiples. Likewise, when set on time play, the operator is given flexibility in setting both the length of time and cost. The "trap" may be programmed to close from zero to seven minutes before time expires.

The company also exhibited a new-and-improved *Cougar ZD-4* pool table and the table game *Quik Poke*.

Dynamo unveiled its new *Electronic 47* pool table; it offers a choice of rack or time play. Players use either a 50-cent coin push or a dollar bill acceptor when on rack play, depending on how the operator sets the table. Time play is also operator-adjustable, ranging up to seven minutes. The company also showed its conventional rack play pool table with "Push Lok" fasteners.

In addition to its usual foosball and air hockey tables, Dynamo exhibited the *Deluxe Edition* air hockey. Introduced at AMOA '89, this piece features bright new graphics, heavy-duty laminate top, deluxe mallets and pucks, and—chiefly—an optional overhead scoring system.

Stella International, mentioned previously for its video poker machine, also exhibited its low-noise air hockey table, *Disco-Taifun*. It has overhead lights that make the outer edges of the table appear to be glowing.

American Shuffleboard showed its tried-and-true table games: bumper pool and *The Classic* pool table, plus *Royal Bank Shot, Royal Cushion,* and *Royal Longboard* shuffle alleys.

Tornado Table Soccer displayed its solid-earning foosball, *The Standard*. Amazing Games showed *Powerkick Tournament 2000*, with a one-piece removable drawer and slide-out playfield. Penn-Ray's *Tournament Soccer* boasts only one moving part in the coin door and cashbox area. Imperial International showcased the durable *Premier Soccer*.

Innovative Concepts in Entertainment (ICE) displayed an improved *Super Kixx* soccer and *Super Chexx* hockey. Each is enclosed within a dome.

Cranes and Rotaries

Anyone wishing to check out the status of cranes today has only to turn to the lyrics from an old tune ("September Song"): "and the days dwindled down to a precious few." Manufacturers of cranes have decreased dramatically in the last few years, while the ranks of merchandise suppliers continue to grow. The increased interest in redemption equipment accounts for this rise in prize suppliers, not merely the presence of cranes.

Number one on the hit parade, so to speak, is the new look of cranes. Jumbo cranes are tops and the '90s styling of more lights and more glass has all the major players exhibiting eye-catching units.

Betson exhibited its *Big Choice Limited Edition* crane along with the single player crane, *Action Claw*, and a variety of the *Big Choice* units. The

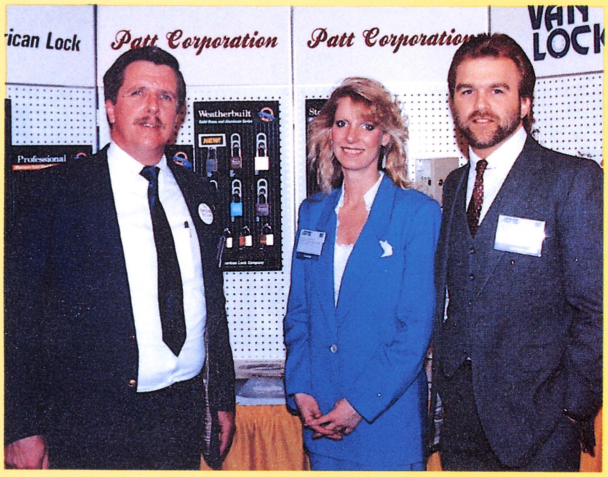
Pinballs

The Phantom of the Opera (Data East Pinball)
Whirlwind (Williams)
The Bally Game Show (Midway Manufacturing)
Silver Slugger (Premier/Gottlieb)
Lights...Camera...Action! (Premier/Gottlieb)

Jukeboxes

DanceStar (Rowe)
CD Nostalgia (Rowe)
LaserStar (Rowe)
Laser WallStar (Rowe)
CD Hideaway (Rowe)
RoweStar (Rowe)
CD/Video Jukebox (Rowe)
The Gazelle (Antique Apparatus)
The Bubbler (Antique Apparatus)
The Peacock (Antique Apparatus)
Laser Juke CD Jukebox (Pioneer)
Laser Juke LaserDisc (Pioneer)
SongBird (Carson City Mfg.)
Star Cruiser (Carson City Mfg.)
Country Classic (Carson City Mfg.)
CD Fire (NSM-Loewen)
CD Caravelle (NSM-Loewen)
CD Fire Stream (NSM-Loewen)
CD Galaxy (NSM-Loewen)
Laser Music System Jukeboxes (Seeburg)
Route 66 (Micro Manufacturing)
Laser 2000 (Rock-Ola)
CD/45 Combo (Rock-Ola)
One More Time (Wurlitzer)
Make My Music (Wurlitzer)
CD Carnegie (Wurlitzer)
CD Hideaway (Wurlitzer)
SL 600 (Wurlitzer)
Lasergraph Video Jukebox (Wurlitzer)

ACME 90



Bob Sullivan of Pioneer Laser Entertainment visits Patt Supply Corp.'s Gail Prorok and George Yurkovich.

Carmen Ricci (l) of Grayhound Electronics explains the new *Super Skill Crane* to Jim Majeski of Always Advertising.

Bob Robbins and Ronald Parr of C.T.I. check out a pre-pack assortment with Best Mfg.'s James Possi.

The Premier Technology guys: Dan Clarton, Duane Miller, and Gil Pollock.

Ed Masters of Hayes Specialties talking with Dave Watt of Carousel Corp.

At the Coin Controls booth: Mike Meisinger, Ellen Evans, and Randy Fromm.

ACME 90

WORLD CUP '90
TECMO

Tecmo's Mike Robinson (l) with Bob Rothman of Game Exchange.

From left: Texans Greg Gaffney, Sharon Morris, Tami Morris, Brent Collins, and Jayne Jackson of Laramie Interests.

T. Q. Ebby (l) of Winners Corp. and Jay Salkin of Jaisy.

Nancy Sales' Tony Lawlor and Steven Lipkin show off the Flintstones and Jetsons to Atari Operations' John Parker, Jeryl Clegg, Rich Pankey, and Mike Hensley.

At A-1 Products, (l-r): Royce Green of Green Games and Marta and Stan Pearson.

Tekbilt's Buzz Brunner (r) shows Mathew Mohammar the new *Zanadew*.

ACME 90

LUNAR GOLF
TIME
35
SCORE
150

In front of Meltec's new *Lunar Golf*, (l-r): John McEwan, Amy McEwan, Mike McEwan, and Roy Nishi.

Pat Lawlor (r), game designer of Williams' new *Whirlwind* pinball, with mechanical designer John Krutch.

DRIBBLES
TIME
SCORE

Melissa Patz (l) enjoys Betson's *Dribbles* basketball game; at right are Stacy Wise and Mike Patz of Jolly Time.

Micro Manufacturing's Charles Hiehle with the company's *Lucky 8 Lines* video poker.

At the Amusement Equipment Exchange (AEE) booth, (l-r): John Neely of Perceptive Resources, Mel LaForce of AEE, and Edna and Dennis Goldman of Power Play.

"Right flipper! I mean left flipper! Damn!" That's Rich Babich of Colorado Game Exchange trying Data East's "brainwave pinball" with the company's Joe Kaminkow.

ACME 90

Action Claw was filled with basketball plushies that corresponded to the company's junior-size basketball game, but more about that in the sports games category.

Smart Industries displayed its line of redesigned cranes, including the *Clean Sweep Jumbo*, *Clean Sweep Super Single*, and new *Clean Sweep Classic*.

Rotaries, which have been scarce of late, appeared at the Smart booth in the form of *Jackpot*, a self-loading unit featuring a ventilating system, fluorescent lighting, and an arm control that resets itself. Designer Robert Noell was on hand to explain the fine points of the machine, which has a capacity of approximately 102 prizes stored in columns in flat, circular plastic containers. Prizes sit on a moving, mirrored glass table. The game has a huge money box with a double lock; the cabinet is acrylic over ABS plastic. *Jackpot* was also shown in the Coin Concepts booth.

"Trog is unique and different enough to be a sleeper; it's cute and not violent."

In addition, Coin Concepts exhibited the new *Playland* crane that comes in a joystick model with regular four-inch claw or jumbo eight-inch claw. A Rowe $1 and $5 bill acceptor comes standard. *Playland* guarantees a prize every time; play is set from $1 to $5 depending on the value of prizes inside.

Grayhound exhibited the new *Super Skill Crane* that offers an extra-deep playfield to hold more product and extra- wide viewing area; a bill acceptor is standard. Grayhound also offers a stuffed toy division to make prize shopping easier.

Showcase displayed its *Animal House* toy vendor that can be set for $1 or $2 per play, and both the 30-cup and 80-cup self-loading models of the *Crown Jewels* rotary.

Leland Corp. dipped into the rotary market with *King Arthur's Round Table*, a rotary capsule vendor housed in a video style cabinet with colorful marquee. Altec exhibited its single upright crane, *Ye Olde Gift Shoppe*, while Kramer displayed the updated *Skill Dozer*.

The Hollywood Group showed a new version of its *Freefall* crane that features plush dropping from a conveyor belt. Newest of all Hollywood cranes is the multi-vend *Turbination* with patented Hyperclaw, plush counters, and merchandise spotlights.

Redemption and Novelty

One redemption manufacturer at the show said he knew the video business was down because of the continuous flow of traffic at his booth. Normally, he said, his equipment gets a quick look as attendees head for the "hit of the show," usually a video game.

Not so this year, as redemption choices soared and operators eager for alternate sources of steady revenue lingered longer by roll downs, ball bowlers, egg vendors, junior-size basketballs, mini golf, and a number of games that featured bouncing balls. Love those ticket dispensing units! This trend also meant careful looking at plush and jewelry supplier booths for appealing items.

Bromley Inc. garnered serious attention for its *Little Pro* miniature golf game housed in a pinball style cabinet. The game is designed for children and features a golfer controlled by a knob, and three microswitch buttons that allow choice of stroke for shooting balls into target holes.

SMS Mfg. presented a new backglass design on its *Pop-A-Ball* unit that is growing in popularity. The game combines amusement poker with a bouncing ball that "pops" cards onto a 13-inch monitor to give winning hands.

This is how it works: players press deal/draw to "pop" cards, discard one to five cards or stand pat, then press deal/draw again to "pop" new cards for a final hand. A double coin mech and ticket dispenser are standard.

Another ticket dispensing game from SMS is *Poker Roll*, a marriage of a roll down and a video poker. Players roll five rubber balls, then discard undesirable cards showing on the color monitor and roll again to get a better hand.

Seidel Amusement Machine Co. exhibited its new roll down, *Quackers*, that features four-channel digital audio with an attract mode and the ability to issue tickets, free games, or credits for winning scores.

Betson Enterprises displayed several models of coin pushers, from the multiplayer *Silver Splash* and *Riviera* to the single player *Klondike*. In addition, the company exhibited *Reel Poker*, a redemption game featuring poker play with cards on reels, and *The Mating Game*, the personality and compatibility game.

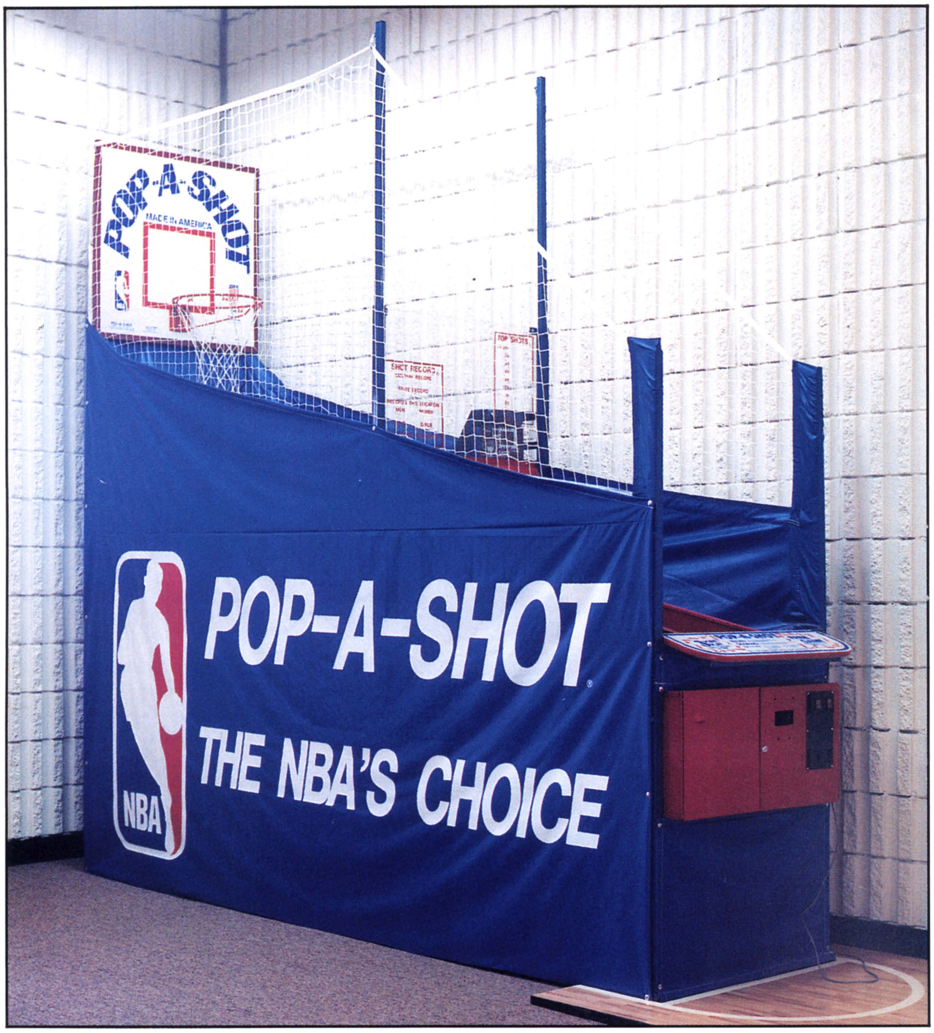
Johnston Products showed two of its games at the Betson booth. Included were the *Kick and Catch* that has players moving a ball through a series of pins, and the *Big Top* shooting game and vendor.

Skee-Ball's ever-popular ball bowler, *Skee-Ball*, enjoyed play from attendees of every age group. Shown in several sizes, *Skee-Ball* features electronic audio scoring and flashing lights. Choices include 6 ft., 8 ft., 10 ft. and 13 ft. models.

Coastal Amusement Distributors offered the multi-player coin pusher *Riverboat* and its smaller sister game, the single player *Showboat*, as well as the *Roosta Shooter* skill target shooting game with a barnyard theme.

Meltec debuted a new item with *Lunar Golf*, a game with operator-adjustable features of play length, coinage, and ticket dispense levels. A joystick control tilts the playfield as youngsters race against the clock to sink real golf balls into lunar craters.

Coin Concepts offered several games for the young set with its *Toss Em* ball toss that does not use an alley. Players toss balls into holes with



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Lenny Dean (l) of Coastal Amusement with Great Britain's Harry Levy of Harry Levy Inc. with the *Roosta Shoota*.

The Merit clan, (l-r): Mort Ansky, Bonnie DeVale, and David Rubenstein by the *Pub Time Premier Edition*.

Fast pitching is required on Doyle's *Peter Panda Pro Pitch*.

Ron Yaffe (l) of Showcase and New Zealander Peter O'Reilly by the *Action Lotto*.

From left: Isaac Ben Yehuda of Mayoni, Don Hageman of Thunderbird Coin Games, and Oscar Robins of Mayoni.

Joe Sladek of Skee-Ball and Cindy Bozman of Reno Games Sales with the ever-popular *Skee-Ball*.

ACME 90

With lovely model are Jon Brady (l) and Howard Cole from North Carolina.

Joe DeMarsico of Kiddie Rides USA and the new *Musical Clown* egg vendor.

Have we got plush! From left: Kenneth Morrissey of Henry's Playland, Phil Steinberg of Rosette, Jackie Williams of Dale M. Williams, and Scott Bassinder of Henry's Playland.

TAITO
TAITO

Taito's Joe Dillon with *Battle Shark*.

Rowe International's Joel Friedman (l) chats with Arnold Greenhut, the company's new chairman and CEO.

Mark Rodman (l) and Chad Reznicek trying out Sega's *Line of Fire*.

graduated point values to win redeemable tickets. Also of interest to children are the *Jumbo* and *Monkey* capsule toy vendors.

Other novelty and redemption choices at the Coin Concepts booth included the *Starburst* single pusher with bonus payout; *Rebound* cover-the-spot game; *Body Match* humorous skill stop game; *Riviera* multi-player coin pusher; *Mating Game* compatibility reader; *Five Card Draw* skill stop game with poker hand theme; and *Power House* strength tester. The company also showed its Redemption Center cabinet.

Bob's Space Racers displayed its well-known *Whac-A-Mole* game, midway style unit *The Water Game*, and the new *X-tra Point*. A one- or two-player game, *X-tra Point* is a football kicking game with player-controlled rods and team figures on the rods.

Exidy exhibited two ball alley games with *Twister* and *Croaker*. Both games use small black rubber balls that players roll down an alley. With *Twister*, points are gained by landing the balls in a series of holes with different point values; *Croaker* has two mouth-popping frogs and a center space value that all translate into tickets for skillful players.

''We don't have to look for blockbusters as much as we used to.''

Bay-Tek debuted two new roll down games, *Fielder's Choice* and *Clown Rolldown*. In *Fielder's Choice*, the object is to roll for only a high score, which is described in baseball terminology. The *Clown Rolldown* gives six balls and the chance at either a high or low score. Both games have the same dimensions, features, and options.

GaMCO wants to cover all the possibilities with several choices of its redesigned *Action Lotto* game, now in credit accumulating and coin-dispensing models. The game features an on-board programmable controller. Players select three numbered pockets on the playfield and try to direct balls to those spots for a score.

GaMCO also showed two single coin pushers, the *Merchandiser 2001* and the *Quicksilver II*. Both operate with tokens or quarters in and out with an optional ticket out.

Data East invited players to ''whack those gators'' in its *Wacky Gator* game that features a colorful cabinet available with or without an egg capsule dispensing portion on the top. It was an even call as to whether more children or adults played the game.

Smart Industries has added a ski alley game to its product lineup with *Smart Ball*, available in 10 ft. or 13 ft. models. Features include multi-coin acceptance, front serviceability, and microprocessor game boards, plus a host of options.

Mayoni displayed two items that draw the attention of youngsters: *Ziggy the Talking Clown* egg vendor that has a large capacity toy bin, and *Big Top Mini Pinball*, which awards small capsule prizes after a game of kid-style pinball.

Lazer-Tron exhibited two lazer gun race games, *Shuttle Launch* and the original *Lazer-Tron*. The original game asks players to fire lazer guns at targets that randomly light up; points and tickets are awarded. *Shuttle Launch* requires shooting the lazer gun at star targets that subsequently launch a space shuttle up the track.

Over at the Amusement Equipment Exchange booth, the company exhibited the arm wrestling machine, *The Grappler*, also several coin pushers: *Silver Circus*, *Quarterflash*, and *Dragon Master*. The Amusement Equipment Exchange, known for reconditioned coin-op equipment, is branching out into marketing these new games. Also shown was *Pop Tops*, a ball toss game that challenges youngsters to get the balls into cans with lids that open intermittently. The coin pushers and ball toss game are manufactured by Perceptive Resources.

Bush Electronics showed *Claw Poker*, a combination crane and poker game housed in an upright cabinet. Players first use a joystick control to move the claw down onto the playfield to grasp a foam ball. Then the player moves the claw around the playfield to position it above a grid of holes with card values. Players have a specified amount of time to accumulate a good poker hand, which appears on the backglass.

Claw Poker is designed for street operators. It dispenses tickets redeemable for prizes on the spot or for prizes that can be obtained from Bush's redemption center in Michigan.

Leisure Time Consultants exhibited the *Comic Clown* egg vendor, which offers flexibility with additional puppets and background that can be changed to add interest without moving the machine. Puppet choices include Punch and Judy, teddy bear, and Father Christmas.

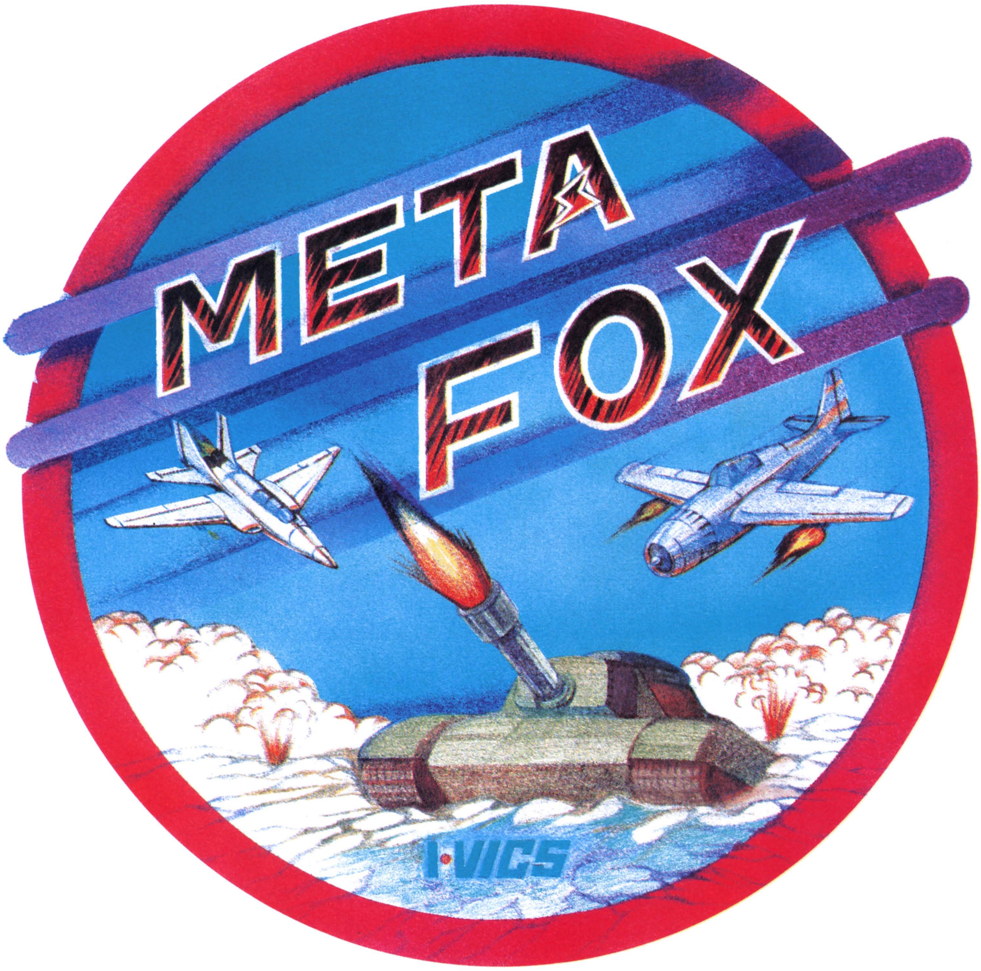
Vari-Tech displayed *Mr. Six Gun*, a game that challenges players to ''quick draw'' a pistol, and several midway style racing games, including *The Water Race* and *Rough Rider*. Also shown was the *Animal Festival* whacking game.

Yankee Game Technology featured the *Bozo the Clown* progressive ball toss game that appeals to youngsters. Bean Industries showed its *Lectro Beans* beanbag toss game with electronic scoreboard.

Kiddie Rides USA displayed a very colorful capsule vendor named *Musical Clown*, which features a life-size clown.

Classic Creations showed the *Hop Shot*, a combination of a ball bowler and a game of pool.

Profitable Games exhibited the *Boxing Machine* two-player boxing match



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ACME 90

SEGA
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TWO CRUDE

Young action adventure fans enjoy *Too Crude* by Data East.

Checking out ICE's *Super Kixx* (l-r): Frank Gumma, Ron Bolger, Jack Willert, Kevin Barry, John Callahan, and Nick Cosentino.

It's free throw time on *Hoops* at the Adastra booth.

Arach
AIR BUSTER

Fabian Espinosa and Tara Reade with Sharp Image's new game *Air Buster.*

Laura Rezek of Bally/Midway introduces Trog to show attendees.

ROWE INTERNATIONA

Glenn Streeter (l) of Antique Apparatus and Rowe's Terry Lacher flank *The Gazelle*.

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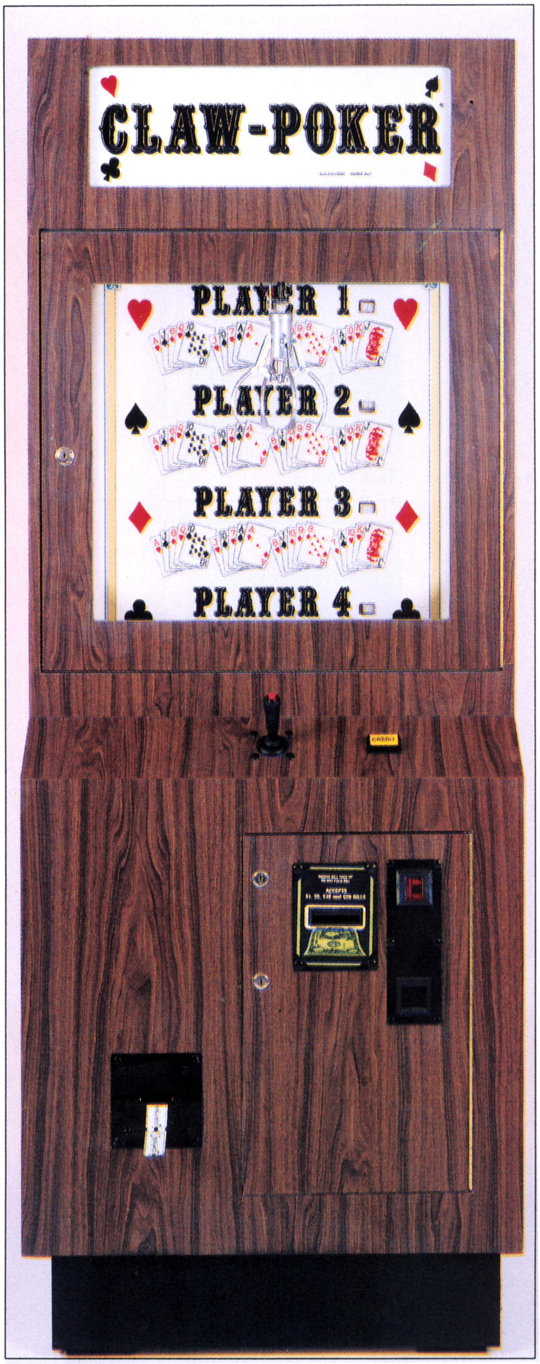
Manufactured by the same Company who developed the highly successful SKILLCLAW® game.



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Push the red action button and the Claw retrieves a soft, lively sponge ball to begin your turn... Your clock is ready with 60 seconds of play time... The robotic Claw rises to the top of the game-play area... Your clock starts and you use the joy stick to maneuver the robotic Claw into position. Dual movement along an axis and around a radius are made simultaneously. You get to your selected drop position quickly... and take your best shot. Once all players have completed their turns...call your best hand!

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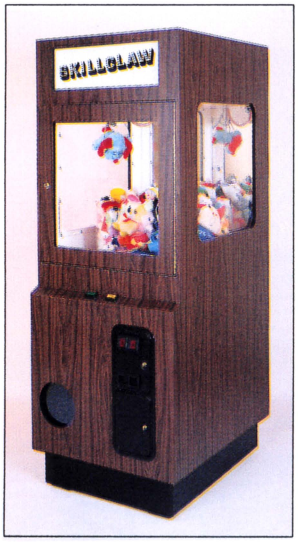

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The S.O.S Good Stuff gang: Steven Chernin, David Chazen, and Hank Mackin with Linda Fernandez of Fun Factory, and Mike Douglas of Texas Coin Co.

Lucas Cantone and Leon Telvi of Video Americano in Puerto Rico with Jerry Davidson and Ed Mallow of Advanced Graphic Designs.

CLAW-POKER
PLAYER 2
PLAYER 3
PLAYER 4

Ron Mendyk (r) of Bush Electronics and Sal Lazuka of Automatic Music & Games about to play *Claw Poker*.

FROM THE DE ERS OF:
MEMBER

At the Strata booth, (l-r): Larry Hodgson, John Cassiday, and Scott Morrison.

P.M.I.
Toys & Novelties
San Antonio, Tx.
INTERNATIONAL

Mike Silverstein (l) and Mark Gawlick at the P.M.I. booth.

At the PRIZES! booth: Georgia Orozco and Toni Endoso with Merle and Mary Paisley of M&M Vending.

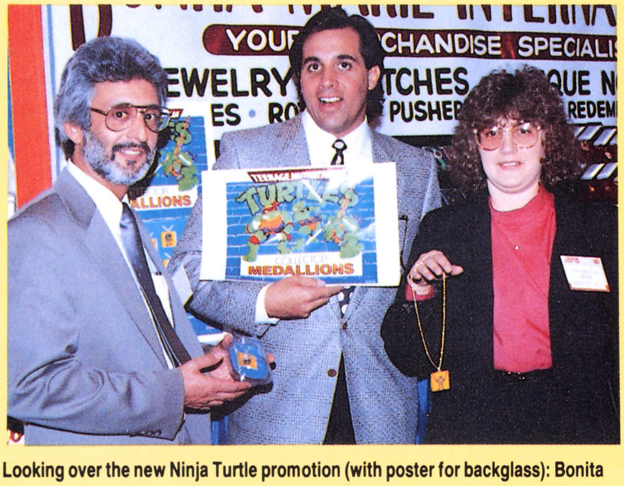
ACME 90

Play Meter's ad director Ron Kogos visits with Craneable's Kathy Moore and Tom McKittrick.

By the *Newport* basketball game, (l-r): Dan Dinnebeil of Grayhound, John Frantzis of Quassy Amusement Park, and Jim Majeski of Always Advertising.

Laurie Seibert drawing for the winner of a free plush pre-pack, with Pearson Plush's Jonathan Pearson and Darleen Hansen.

The Roger Williams Mint booth manned by Julie Kilmartin and Shelia Delacona with visitors Richard and Walter Morris of J. S. Morris.



Looking over the new Ninja Turtle promotion (with poster for backglass): Bonita Marie's Lou Cappetta and David Katz with Karen Thorpe of Adventure Properties Ltd.

Steve Pullen of Kentucky Coin looks over the new *Smart Ball* game with Gordon Smart.

game, and the new *Snappy Sticker* machine that invites customers to custom print their own stickers. Designed for ''clean'' messages, the machine will not print certain words that may be considered offensive. A color monitor a the top of the machine gives directions and affords ''touch'' selection of the message to be printed.

Sports Games

Kid-size basketball games top this list. Choices here are many, and five different manufacturers featured such units in their booths. Designing a good basketball game for youngsters is a challenge. As one manufacturer put it, ''children are not adults with short legs.''

Both Betson Enterprises and Doyle & Associates showed the new *Dribbles Jr. Basketball* that has an attract mode with speech, two modes of play, and optional specified number of shots per game. *Dribbles* is a joint venture, with Betson supplying software design, artwork, and sound; Doyle will handle cabinetry and manufacturing.

Design Plus has obtained the license to use Bozo on its small basketball game, *Bozo Basketball*. Flashing lights and circus music attract attention on this game, which can be set for coins, tickets, and game times. Options include a top crown net and winner light.

Smart showed the *Shoot to Win! Jr.* that comes with ticket dispenser standard, sensor for accurate scoring, credit/score digital readout, catchy musical tune, and top net.

> ***''We need to be open-minded, think of what our operations need, and evaluate what's here.''***

Coin Concepts featured its *Jr. All American* child-size basketball game with metal frame construction, attract mode, three coin levels, and adjustable ticket award levels.

Intermark introduced its small-fry basketball game, *Tot Shot*, which features a solid wood cabinet, sound effects, and adjustable price, time, and ticket settings.

In the adult-size basketball category, Pop-A-Shot exhibited *Pop-A-Shot*, available in three different models; Smart showed the *Shoot to Win! II* single and double hoop models; Doyle & Associates displayed *Hoop Shot! Gold*; Adastra showed its fold-up basketball game *Hoops*; and Vari-Tech exhibited *Hot Shots*.

Grayhound Electronics debuted *Newport*, a basketball game with free game point setting, space-saving design, dollar bill acceptor, and provisions for tournament upgrading. The company plans an aggressive tournament program.

In other sports, Doyle showed its *Golfer Golf* mini golf game that features playful golfer obstacles, and the *Peter Panda Pro Pitch* game with a big panda on the back panel.

Vari-Tech brought its *Mini Pro Golf* putting game to the show and Intermark brought the football toss game, *Quarterback Challenge*.

Darts

Merit exhibited its *Pub Time II Plus 2* game in kit form, along with a selection of other Pub Time dart games, including the classy *Premier Edition*.

The emphasis was clearly on *Pub Time II Plus 2*, which has an overhead system with ''in-line'' Cricket. Twenty-five games and variations can be played on the game. Features include automatic player change and missed dart sensor, credit retention system with readout, convenient league envelope Slide-Slot, and the Stat-Pak, Merit's original player statistics software.

Arachnid debuted a new English mark Darts model with the *6300T*, which features a color monitor atop the unit in a spot clearly viewed even during a crowded match. The monitor is large, 12 inches instead of nine inches. The game comes in both the standard English Mark Darts game colors and the Coors Light Silver Bullet Sharpshooter Edition.

Other features include credit accumulation and both the Arachnid Web and Spider Writer. The company also showed English Mark Darts in the oak cabinet.

Valley Recreation Products displayed a bank of its *Cougar Darts*. The game bears the famous Valley Cougar logo and offers these features: patented T-60/30 thin-line, flush-mount ''spider'' target, an American size target that is interchangeable with the international size, overhead scoring with four-player Cricket standard, and league software with readout.

All the dart manufacturers are looking forward to a great crowd this year at the National Dart Association championship set for Las Vegas in early May.

Countertops

Mayoni featured a series of impulse games in countertop form with *Carmen the Gypsy*, a palm-reading fortune teller, and a wide choice of other games such as *Memory Quiz, Sex Reactor, Heart Rate, Stress, Personality Analyzer, Physical Fitness, Bio Scanner,* and *Love Tester*. The company's newest unit is *The Perfect Match*, a compatibility predicting machine. The *Compu-Scale* weight and health data unit was also in the Mayoni booth.

Merit Industries demonstrated its series of Genie games. Included are four choices: *Bulls Eye*, a target game; *Scramble*, a fast-paced word game; *Four Score*, a connect-the-dots game; and *Pitter Pattern*, a memory teaser. The games are interchangeable by simply replacing a control panel, plexiglass display, and PCB, all without tools; cabinets are mounted on a swivel base.

Vari-Tech exhibited a trio of countertops in *Test Your Memory, Test Your Speed*, and *Test Your Reaction*.

Quantum Industries displayed two countertop games in *Bet or Fold*, an amusement poker, and *Pick 'n Play*, a game offering a choice of seven games, from Hang Man to Super Triv. ☐

NEO·GEO®

MVS®

MULTI VIDEO SYSTEM

SNK

TECHNICAL FEATURES

Fast 16 Bit Main Microprocessor

Allows game software to be executed up to four times faster than conventional video game hardware.

Expanded ROM Capacity

Up to 64 Megabytes of GAME ROM storage, allows for superior graphics and sounds, makes ordinary video games containing less than 10 Megabytes of GAME ROM look and sound weak by comparison!

Incredible Sprite Generation

Sprites are groups of Pixels (screen dots) that can be moved around on the screen. They are used for displaying animated objects, such as the Main Characters. Typical coin-op game hardware can display less than 80 sprites on the screen. Neo-Geo can display and manipulate 380 Sprites simultaneously! Neo-Geo also has a unique hardware feature for enlarging and reducing Sprites smoothly!

Maximum Background Video

Neo-Geo's advanced hardware can display and independently scroll 3 unique Background Video scenes. This allows Neo-Geo to create realistic 3D effects! Neo-Geo can store up to 65,536 16x16 pixel Background Characters in its 8 Megabyte Character Roms!

Tremendous Color Palette

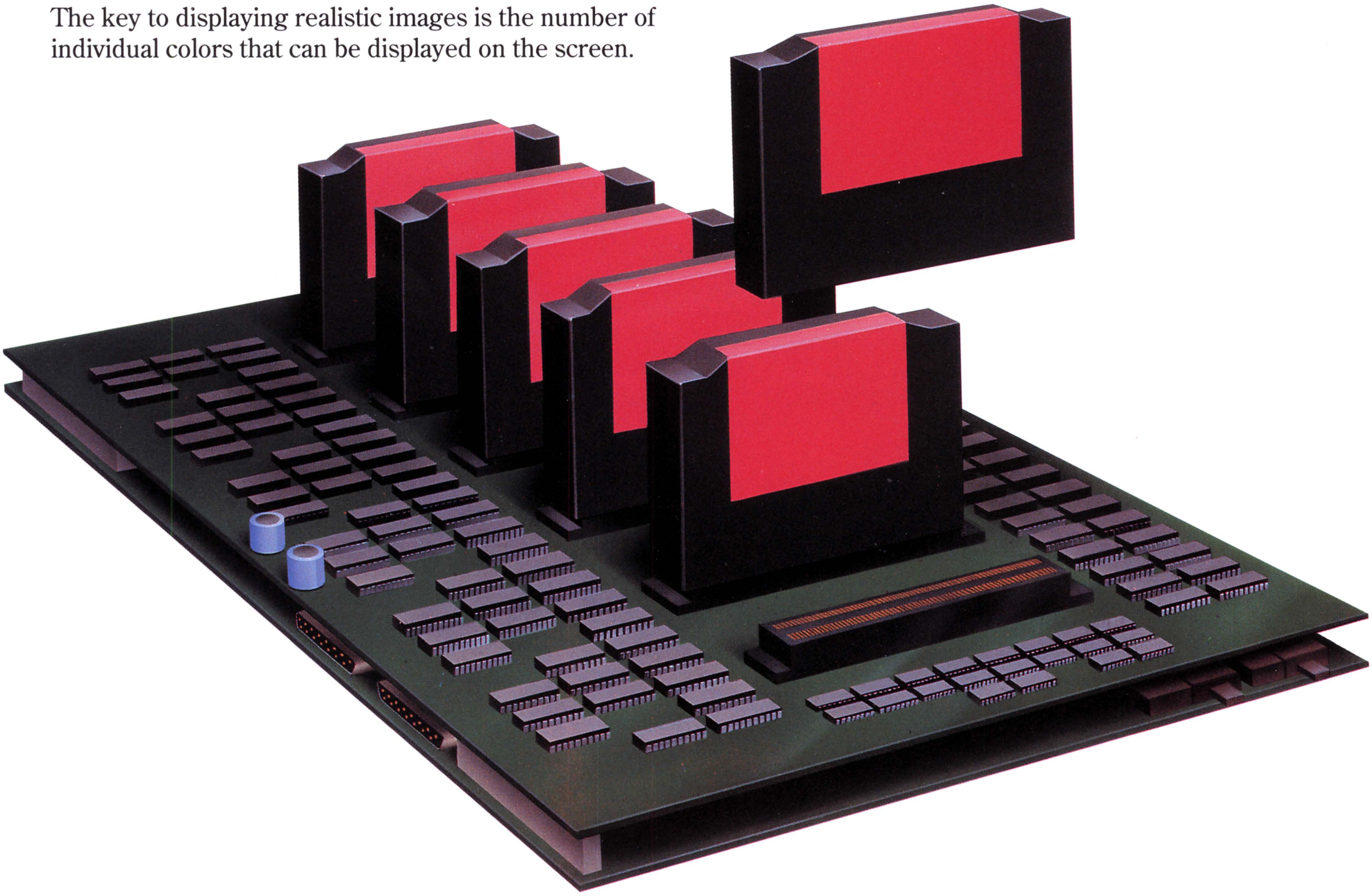
The key to displaying realistic images is the number of individual colors that can be displayed on the screen. Typical coin-op hardware can display from 64 to 512 different colors at the same time, Neo-Geo can display 4096 colors from a selection of 65,536 total colors! This allows the capability to display photo-quality graphics on a standard resolution monitor!

Compact Disk Quality Sound

3 channels of Programmable Sound Generation (PSG), 7 channels of Pulse Control Modulation (PCM), 2 channels of Frequency Modulation (FM), and a channel of Noise generation, combined with true Stereophonic Audio Output, allows Neo-Geo to deliver incredible, true to life audio effects. Each Neo-Geo system comes with a pair of Personal Stereo Headphone jacks on the front of the Control Panel for the ultimate in player enjoyment!

Advanced Hardware Test Program

The Neo-Geo hardware can diagnose potential hardware problems, such as a Rom or Ram failure, using its built-in Test Mode Program. The Main Volume control and Headphone Volume control can be easily accessed through the Control Panel.



CABINET FEATURES

- ♦ Extensive use of Plywood for maximum cabinet durability.
- ♦ Control Panel covered with Lexan for long lasting, easily maintained finish.
- ♦ Hinged Marquee Bezel for easy access to Game Title Cards.
- ♦ Hi-Tech Solid State Electro-illuminescence flat panel used for Title Card back-lighting!
- ♦ Convenient Game Cartridge access behind the Control Panel.
- ♦ Scratch-Resistant Tempered Monitor Glass.
- ♦ Headphone jacks allow the player to fully appreciate the stereo sound effects.
- ♦ IC Memory Card slot allows the player to save his current game progress to continue at a later time.

CABINET SPECIFICATIONS

HEIGHT:	**WIDTH:**
MVS-25-6 76.0″	*MVS-25-6* 31.8″
MVS-25-4 76.0″	*MVS-25-4* 25.25"
MVS-19-4 76.0″	*MVS-19-4* 25.25″

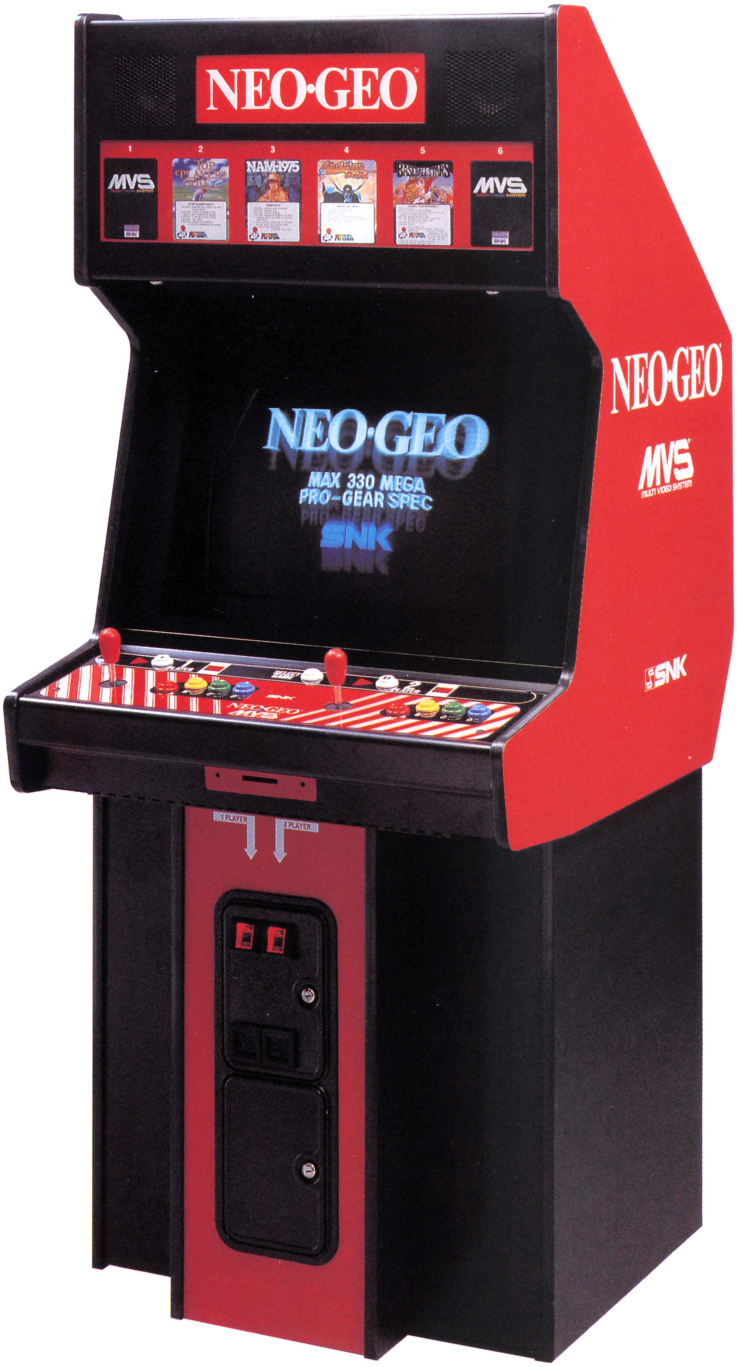
DEPTH:	**CAPACITY:**
MVS-25-6 36.36″	*MVS-25-6* 6 GAME PAKS
MVS-25-4 36.36″	*MVS-25-4* 4 GAME PAKS
MVS-19-4 36.36″	*MVS-19-4* 4 GAME PAKS

MONITOR:

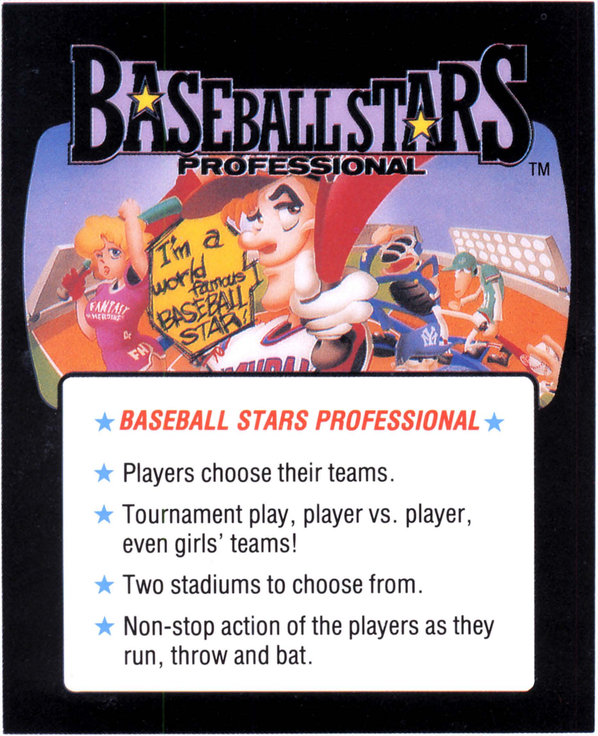
MVS-25-6
25″ HORIZONTAL

MVS-25-4
25″ HORIZONTAL

MVS-19-4
19″ HORIZONTAL

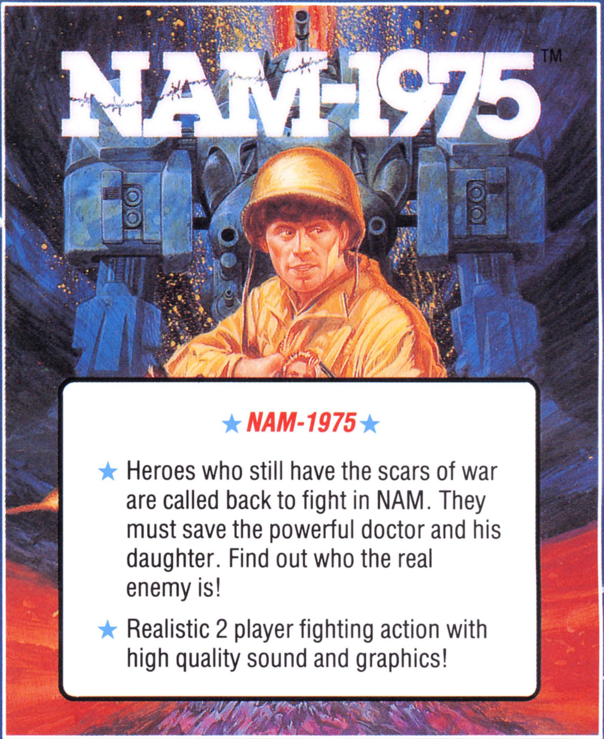


SNK BRINGS OUT THE STARS!


BASEBALL STARS PROFESSIONAL™
I'm a world famous BASEBALL STAR!

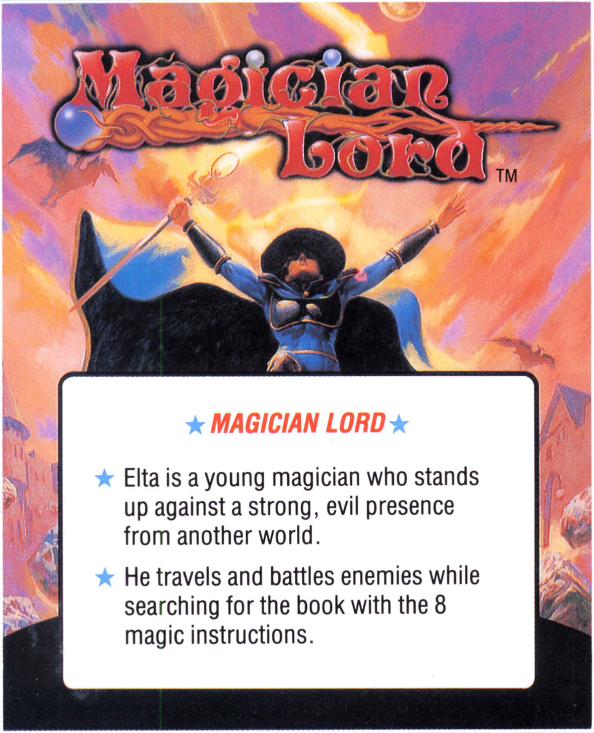
★ BASEBALL STARS PROFESSIONAL ★

- ★ Players choose their teams.
- ★ Tournament play, player vs. player, even girls' teams!
- ★ Two stadiums to choose from.
- ★ Non-stop action of the players as they run, throw and bat.



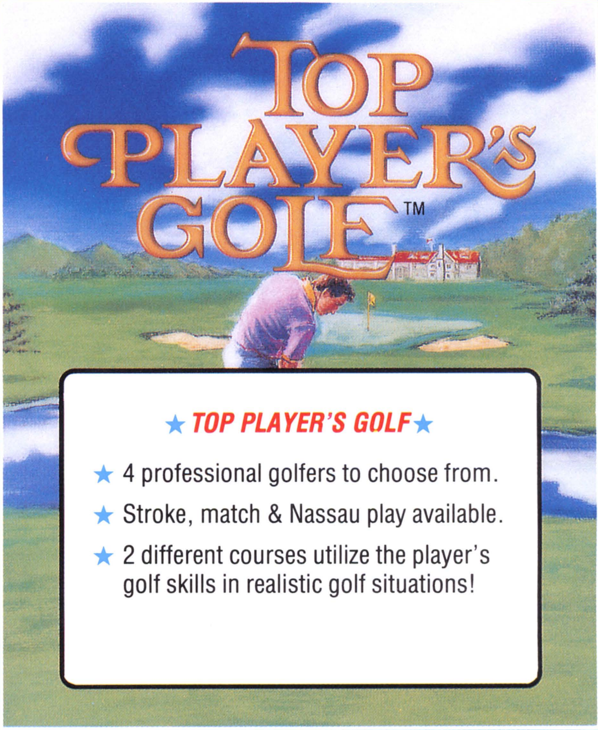
★ NAM-1975 ★

- ★ Heroes who still have the scars of war are called back to fight in NAM. They must save the powerful doctor and his daughter. Find out who the real enemy is!
- ★ Realistic 2 player fighting action with high quality sound and graphics!



★ MAGICIAN LORD ★

- ★ Elta is a young magician who stands up against a strong, evil presence from another world.
- ★ He travels and battles enemies while searching for the book with the 8 magic instructions.



★ TOP PLAYER'S GOLF ★

- ★ 4 professional golfers to choose from.
- ★ Stroke, match & Nassau play available.
- ★ 2 different courses utilize the player's golf skills in realistic golf situations!

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RIDING HERO™

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- ★ Be a winner by racing in the circuit and competing against other top racers!
- ★ The first title to use the NEO•GEO Multi-Link option.

SNK

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ACME 90

Surrounding U.S. Games' new *Pot-O-Gold* video pulltab, (l-r): Mike Horan, Dickie Hanner, Chris Cummings, and Paul Moriarity.

John Sisson (l) of Barcrest shows *Reel Poker* to John Trudeau of Premier and Ana Camacho.

Dick Davis (l) and Jim Lakey of Valley Vending Service check out the sound of NSM/Loewen America's *CD Fire*.

By *Cougar Darts*, (l-r): Chuck Milhem of Valley, Fred and Doug Skor of World Wide Distributing, and Dick Shelton of Valley.

This couple battle it out on Dynamo's new *Deluxe Edition* air hockey table.

A trio of *Ameri Darts* players at Ameri Corp.'s booth, (l-r): Sal Lazuka, Brian Parish, and Bill Jones of Automatic Music & Games.

Buying tips from ACME

Frank Seninsky

At this year's ACME, it looked like every non-video, and some videos like *Tetris*, had ticket dispensers. Redemption is finally blossoming across the country, and I'll cover the tops in this category later.

Twice each year I'm called upon to pick all the ''winners'' at both AMOA and ACME. This is usually not that difficult to do because all I am doing is stating the games that Alpha-Omega will be buying during the weeks following each show. Naturally, we would only buy the best product for ourselves.

In my opinion there was no ''hit of the show,'' mainly because *F-15 Strike Eagle* (MicroProse) wasn't officially shown, and it isn't quite ready. This game will be expensive ($7,000 range), but appears to be a contender for long-term $1 play. Although it is only for arcades and those very strong street locations, the industry welcomes it with open arms. I am going to test this game and will certainly consider purchasing a few if I see $500-$1,000 collections.

There were several interesting new games shown, but Alpha-Omega is going to continue to purchase the games that have been earning excellent numbers on our route for the past weeks. We still need more Konami *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, the dedicated chart topper, which continues to earn well. It will be up on the charts at least until year's end due to the millions of dollars in promotions that are behind this theme.

Final Fight (Capcom), the leading kit, has been outearning *Turtles* for the past four weeks. This is the best ROI game available when you consider that Capcom will guarantee a $500 credit for its return within 18 months.

I am also very pleased with the long-lasting earnings of *Beast Busters* (SNK) and will buy a few additional pieces. *Klax* (Atari) has also been doing the kind of numbers that *Tetris* did last year in our older teenage and young adult game rooms. For my particular situation, its low price makes it the second best ROI available. (The *Tetris* closeout at the AMOA show was the best).

World Cup '90 (Tecmo) is racking up good numbers in our arcades and game rooms where soccer is a popular sport. The kids like it and the price is right.

With most of our budget committed to the games above, what is left will be spend on the following (maybe???).

Dedicated games

Mercs (Capcom) received a lot of attention and is earning very high numbers (just behind *Turtles* and *Final Fight*.) Capcom views this as an opportunity to sell it only as a dedicated games. Too bad it will not be available as a kit. Capcom knows that they have a winner and it's an accelerated way for them to get more of their systems out in the field.

G-Loc Air Battle (Sega) is a good game, but price will make it tough for many operators to consider. I will buy some of the uprights and seriously look at the sit-down model for our large game rooms.

Trog (Bally/Midway) could be a ''sleeper.'' I first thought it was just an arcade piece until I saw many adults (especially females) having a lot of fun playing it. I will be watching this game very closely over the next months.

Kits

There were some good-looking kits; I'll just list those I'm considering but in no particular order.

Cadash (Taito) drew my attention because this two-player game can be linked up to a second game, so four players can play. The reasonable price also makes it attractive.

M.V.P. (Sega) was the best completed baseball game shown. I have been looking for a good baseball video since *World Series*. I sure hope that *M.V.P.* can do the job.

Snow Bros. (Romstar) is another sleeper that many may not have noticed. Look for this one to move onto and up the charts.

Bloxeed (Sega) has the lowest price of any new kit shown. For this reason, plus the excitement it generated, it's a game to keep an eye on.

Aliens (Konami), a two-player interactive horizontal kit, has a movie behind it in addition to strong player appeal. The title can't hurt; many players told me they tried it because of the instant recognition factor.

Pinballs

Each manufacturer showed a strong pinball in this the "Year of the Pinball." *Whirlwind* (Williams) has been our top pin this past month, outearning *Elvira* and *Police Force*. *Phantom of the Opera* (Data East) looks great. So does *Game Show* (Bally/Midway). The low-priced *Silver Slugger* (Premier), with the simplicity and skill level of the old-time Gottlieb pins, should be considered when you look at ROI for your pinball budget. Adults who love the older pins and can't find them anymore may gravitate to this model.

Redemption

Little Pro (Bromley), the mechanical miniature golf game in a pinball style cabinet, is a must for every redemption arcade. I feel that it will be earning well on location for many years to come.

> ***"It has been quite a while since a steady-earning adult game has hit the market."***

Toss 'Em (Coin Concepts) caught my eye months ago at the IAAPA show. I'm going to use this mini-mini skeeball in redemption areas where there isn't any room for skeeball. Heck, I may even put one or two right next to my skeeballs! I believe that the earnings on this game will shock many operators.

Pop-A-Ball (SMS), in its new cabinet, looks like a great traditional redemption piece. By that I mean that it works well in a grouping of four and up. It's been a long time since I've seen a redemption game that I would put into that category.

Silver Struggle (Plateau) is just like the tilting maze game with the little silver ball that we all played as kids. A quarter is manipulated through a maze. As it covers sensors, scores are mounted up. Ticket pay-off builds in jackpot fashion. This is one of the sleepers in redemption that could last and last.

Mini basketballs

There were at least five shown, so it's obvious that their popularity is catching on. There will be several design changes as each manufacturer discovers just what the little kids like. Overall, Coin Concepts is months ahead with its *Jr. All American*.

> ***"Redemption is finally blossoming across the country."***

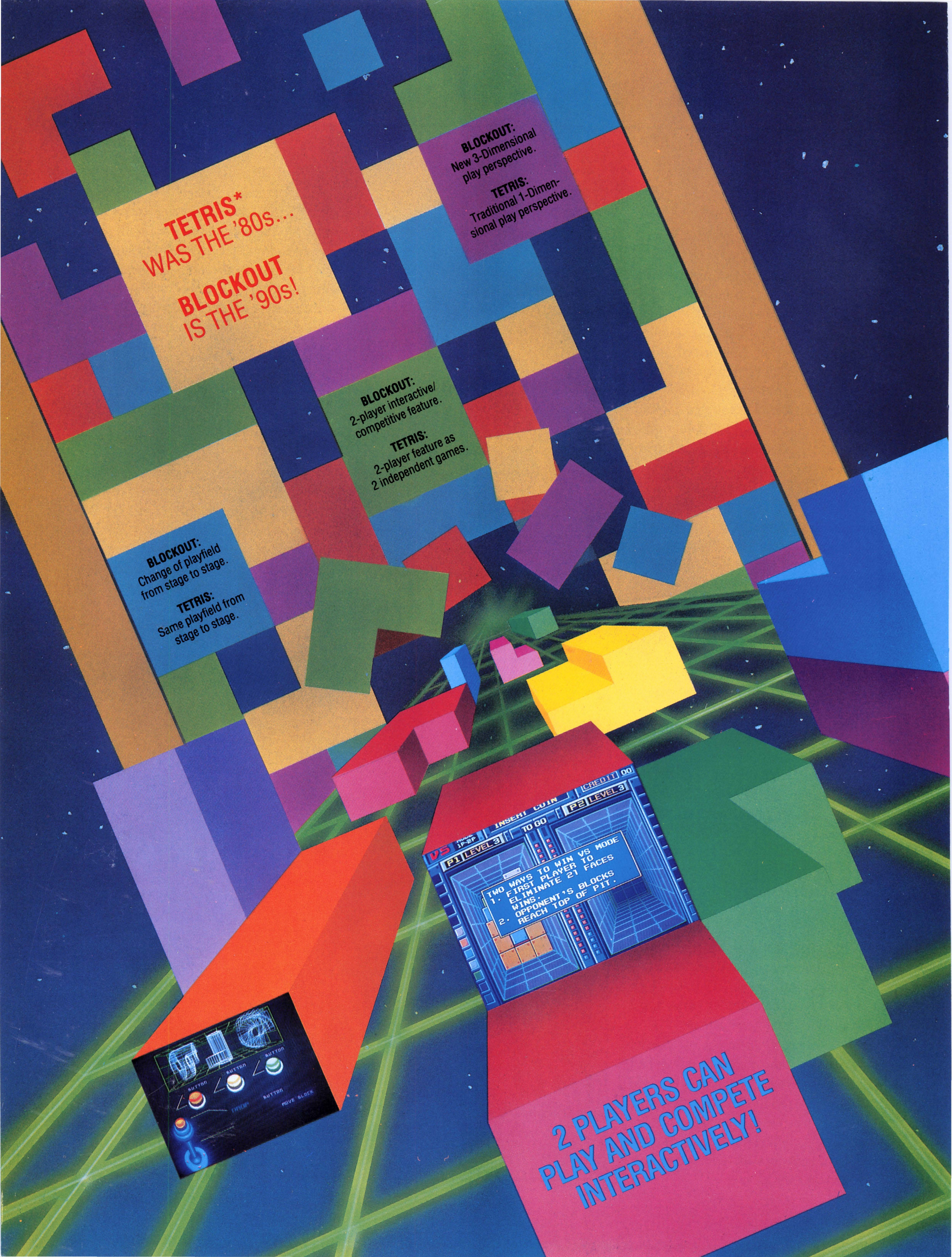
Best tavern game

Slick Shot (Grand Products) received the most attention on the show floor. This pool/video is great for bar locations whether they have pool tables or not. I don't expect it to earn numbers like *Turtles*, but it has been quite a while since a steady-earning adult game has hit the market. The software needs a bit more tweeking to reduce the strength necessary to hit the cue ball on some difficult shots and add additional realism. I'm sure that this is a simple correction. I'd also recommend setting this game on EASY (30 seconds), as adults need additional time in learning how to play any game!

I've chosen more games than I should have, but I didn't think there was anyone I wanted to leave out. I may have overlooked some great products, but I'm only one individual. I've done the best I could under the rushed circumstances. As always...keep cranking! ☐

SLICK
GRAND
PRODUCTS
SLICK
SEGA

Grand Products' *Slick Shot*.



TETRIS* WAS THE '80s…

BLOCKOUT IS THE '90s!

BLOCKOUT: New 3-Dimensional play perspective.

TETRIS: Traditional 1-Dimensional play perspective.

BLOCKOUT: 2-player interactive/competitive feature.

TETRIS: 2-player feature as 2 independent games.

BLOCKOUT: Change of playfield from stage to stage.

TETRIS: Same playfield from stage to stage.

CREDIT 00

INSERT COIN

P2 LEVEL 3

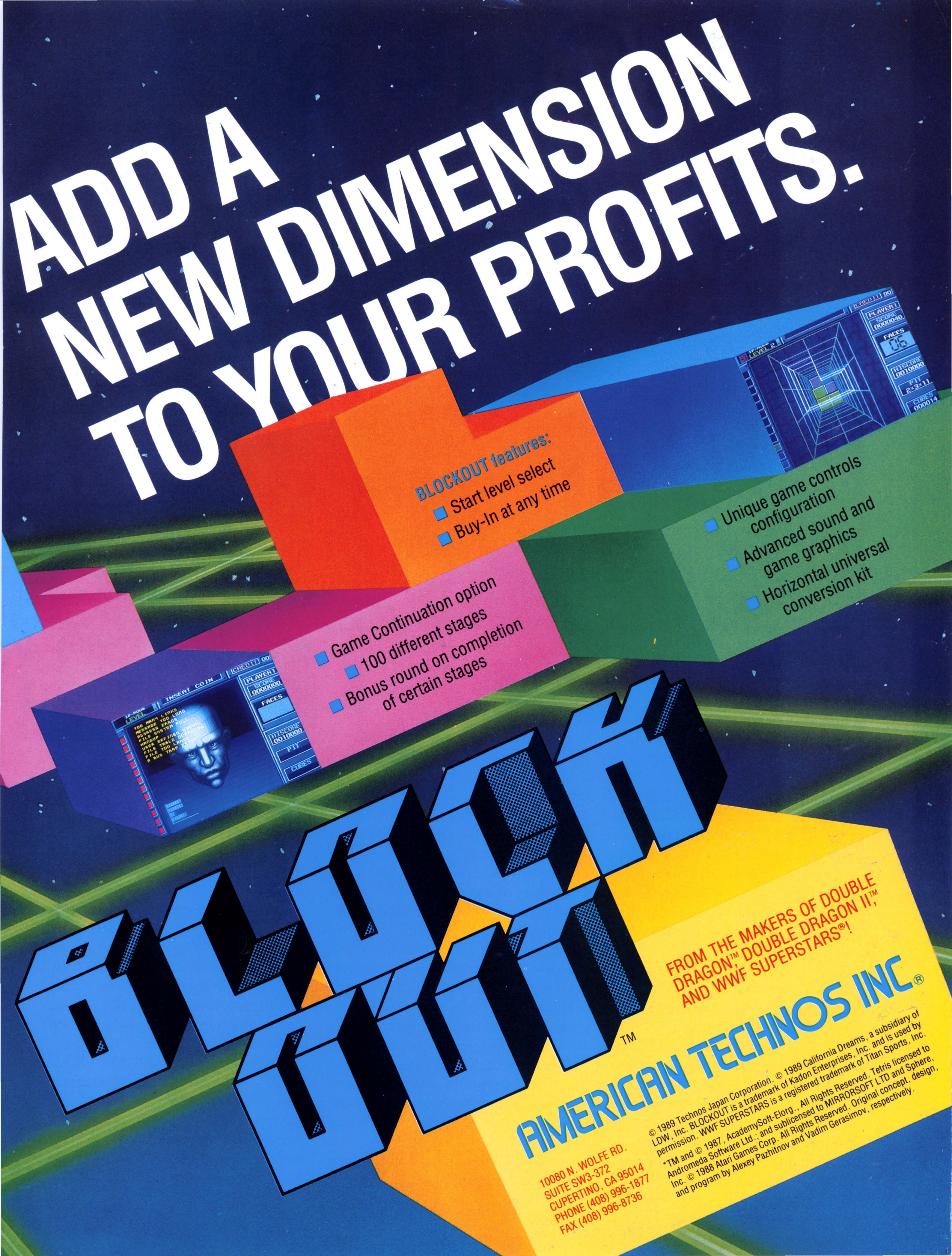
TO GO

VS

P1 LEVEL 3

TWO WAYS TO WIN VS MODE
1. FIRST PLAYER TO ELIMINATE 21 FACES WINS.
2. OPPONENT'S BLOCKS REACH TOP OF PIT.

2 PLAYERS CAN PLAY AND COMPETE INTERACTIVELY!


CREDIT 00
PLAYER1
SCORE
0000040
FACES
05
LEVEL 2
HISCORE
0010000
PIT
2*3*11
CUBES
000014
INSERT COIN
LEVEL
FACES
HISCORE
0010000
PIT
CUBES
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ADD A NEW DIMENSION TO YOUR PROFITS.

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*TM and © 1987, AcademySoft-Elorg., All Rights Reserved. Tetris licensed to Andromeda Software Ltd.; and sublicensed to MIRRORSOFT LTD and Sphere, Inc. © 1988 Atari Games Corp. All Rights Reserved. Original concept, design, and program by Alexey Pazhitnov and Vadim Gerasimov, respectively.

Operator Comments

Jeff Seligman
Don Hansen
Mardi Gras Games
New Orleans, La.

I really enjoyed *Trog*; it's the greatest thing since *Pac-Man*. We both like it, which is usually the kiss of death for a game. Little kids, ladies, and older people would all like *Trog*. It doesn't take long to figure out. (Jeff) This is the first game since *Pac-Man* that made me want to feed quarters into it. Also, it's one of the few games that the ladies would like to play. There aren't many games which can claim that. (Don)

SNK's *Neo-Geo* system looks good, but they will need a great game to make operators buy it. The technology is there, but I don't see any games with much player appeal. (Jeff) The games are adequate, but I don't see any blockbusters. A system needs a blockbuster game, or operators won't buy it. If there's at least one great game, operators will buy the system and hope for others in the future. (Don)

Overall, we'd have to say this was a pretty disappointing show.

Jane Adkins
Take Ten Corp.
Charlotte, N.C.

This show had the right amount of equipment to show; there was just enough for me to look at and take back home. I didn't see a game with the impact of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, but there were plenty of good kits. Nothing stood out in video, but I'll probably go back with one or two of everything I saw. I shouldn't lose money on any of them.

All of the pinballs looked good. We're definitely seeing a resurgence in pinball popularity. Data East's *Phantom of the Opera* is challenging, which is something you need if your going to ask for 50 cents a play. *Silver Slugger* by Premier is a good, basic pin. The industry needs to get back to basics in pinball.

In redemption, Meltec's *Lunar Golf* was good; it's simple to understand, yet challenging. Bay-Tek's new pieces looked good. I've always liked the support they give us.

Overall, nothing stands out, but there was enough new product to keep the locations fresh. I did have one disappointment: I had to find someone to show me how to play the games at a lot of the booths, more so than in the past.

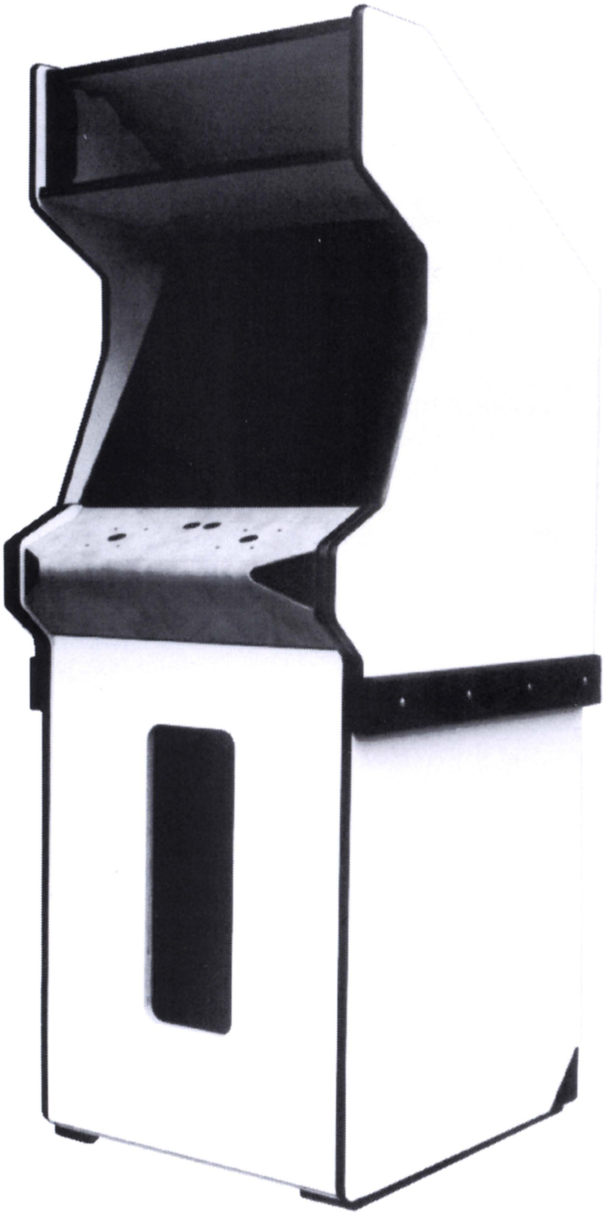
Steve Epstein
The Broadway Arcade
New York City, N.Y.

It was nice to see all of the pinball booths filled with people, which shows that pinball's popularity has returned. This wasn't the case for all of the video booths. This says that there are special videos not being ignored, like *Trog*, that try to do something different. These booths drew crowds, while the ninja/fighting games weren't really looked at. Hopefully, this is sending a message to the manufacturers to move in another direction.

I also want to mention Premier's *Silver Slugger*. Being an old-timer, it was gratifying to see a pin like that. It will address and appeal to the older, skilled player. I hope it and future games like it will bring back this type of player, who's been ignored in the recent past. We could use

New Product

KNOCK DOWN INDUSTRIES



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Interchangeable and replaceable panels makes this cabinet convenient and versatile.

The Kit-Kabinet accommodates 19", 25" or 27" monitors. Although with its unique space saving design its only 3" wider than a standard 19" video cabinet.

Light weight quality plywood construction lowers the base cabinet weight to only 180 pounds.

The most space saving design of all large monitor cabinets. Ideal for all street and arcade locations.

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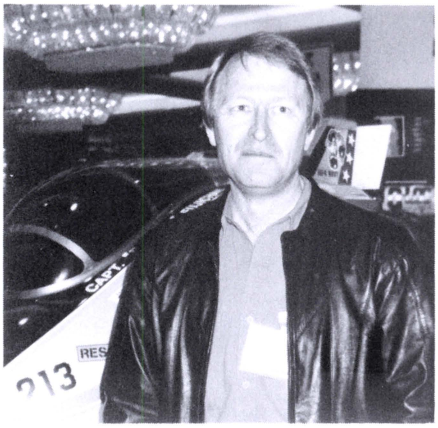
more pinballs with less ramps and fancy features.



Jim Mason
High Country Games
Laramie, Wyo.

At the firing line seminar I brought up the subject of manufacturers shipping games set for 50-cent play which can't be changed over to 25-cent play. Their answer was, "It's the operator's job."

I get angry when I hear operators say their locations won't let them raise the price per play. Operators need to have much better communication with their locations. We need to get higher price per play on games and be able to convince our locations. I have raised my pool tables to 75-cent play and every location has shown an increase in profit, some as much as 48 percent. But I had to convince them to do it.

In Europe a credit system is used, whereby the player purchases a card with game credits on it. Players slip the card into the game machine and a credit is taken off for each game played. With something like that here we could charge anything we wanted per game and not be limited to quarter intervals.

James Overman
Gamemaster Amusements
Baton Rouge, La.

Reinvesting in equipment and managing your operation well are keys to success in this business. Operators cannot throw up their hands; we all have to hustle. Your route reflects how you buy. A lot of money can be made on the used market if you choose wisely.

Whenever you put a different game in a location it will earn more than the previous one because players will always come to something that is new to them. That's all the location wants: a good variety of games that are clean. Video games are not automatic magnets for youngsters anymore.

At this show I've seen several games that interest me. At the top of my list is *D J Boy*; it's going to be great. The format of kick, punch, and jump with the hero on a skateboard will attract players from eight to 14 years old. *Bloxxed* is a good bar piece, and *Snow Bros.* will bridge the gender gap. There's action but it's not violent or boring. *W.G.P.* seems a good arcade piece, and *Capcom Baseball* with its cartoon-shaped characters is different enough to attract a varied clientele.

Steve McCaul
Ryan Amusement Co.
Bourne, Mass.

We're all in the entertainment business, whether it be coin-op or the home. I'm looking for unique pieces to keep my customers coming out into a social atmosphere and enjoying themselves.

Ryan presently has 12 family amusement centers. We've seen an increase in customers playing redemption and novelty games in the last three months of this year compared to last year. I am definitely focusing my attention on redemption equipment at the show and I have seen some unique product.

The key in redemption is the prize assortment and a constant rotation of items to keep player interest at a high level.

Dale Moore
L.A. Games
Torrance, Calif.

The American subsidiary companies of Japanese video manufacturers have their hearts in coin-op but their paychecks in the consumer division. What we need in this industry is more manufacturers whose tail is on the line in coin-op.

Big arcade locations have never been neglected, but street operators are having a really tough time and face very few pre-home game customers. If manufacturers do spend money and time in R&D for coin-op they can produce games such as Capcom's *Final Fight* that are successful for us. I suspect that manufacturers have a very large R&D staff for home games and a miniscule one, or none, for coin-op. Most games seem to be originally designed for the home, except for the large arcade pieces.

In a fair fight I'm happy to compete. But the leaders of the companies we look toward to fight the competition (home games) have a conflict of interest since they are so firmly entrenched on the home side. Operators in coin-op find themselves leaderless. ☐

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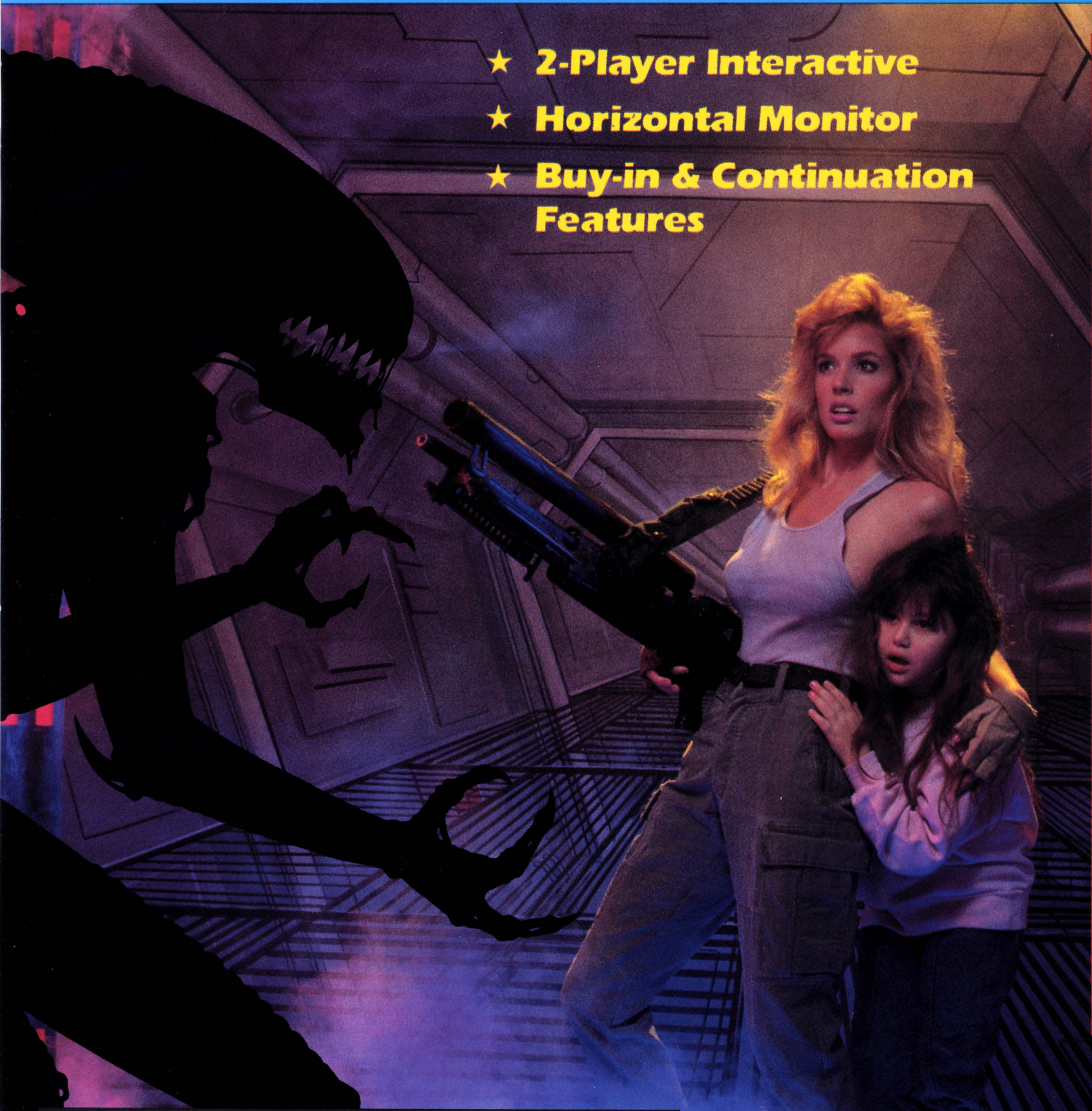

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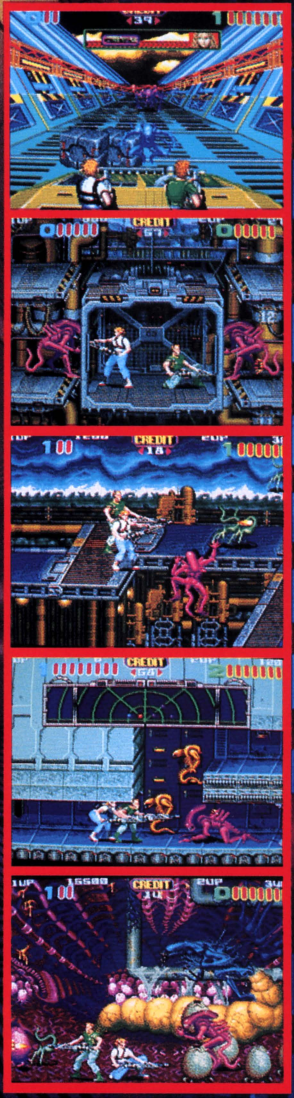

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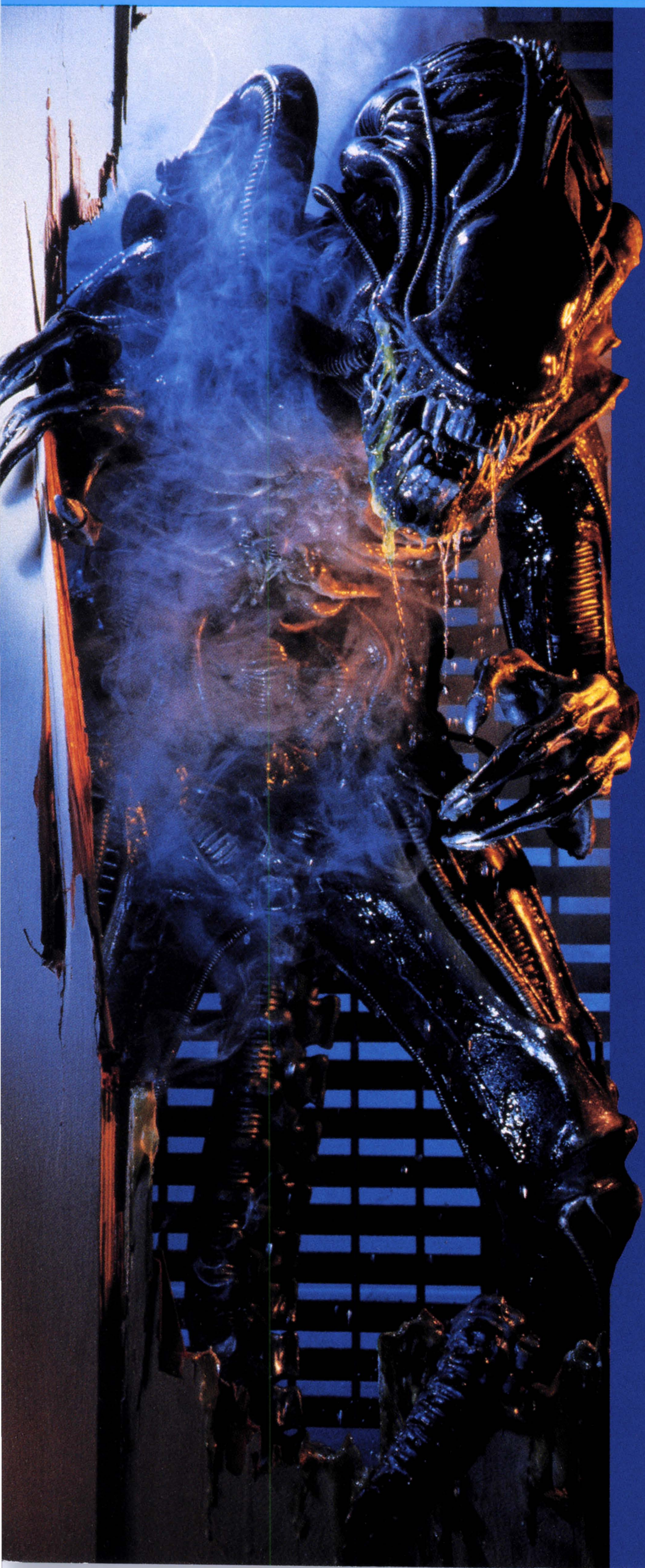

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Upon arrival at LV426 Acheron, the magnitude of the threat sinks in. The settlement is overrun with aliens, and you are expected to eliminate every one of them. The mission takes you through airways, elevators, underground waterways, and tunnel systems within the space colony. Along the way, you will encounter a multitude of species of alien creatures.

The situation gets worse, so you must get tougher. In addition to fighting the existing aliens, there are also incubation rooms and hatching grounds everywhere. You must dodge fatal electric shock waves, barricades, steam blasts, and dripping doses of alien acid in pursuit of your goal. The task of blowing away the aliens is aided with the use of such power weapons as missiles, triple bullets, flamethrowers, three-way shots, and bombs.

You proceed into the mother alien's lair, where she is hatching her larvae. After destroying her, you believe the mission is accomplished, and settle into the space ship for the long journey home. However, you soon realize that there is one more alien—and it's in your ship. In the last, most desperate fight, the fate of the universe depends on you. Will the alien win, and come back to your colony to wipe out all human life, or can you emerge victorious, destroying the alien and blasting its remains into outer space?

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SEMINARS

Firing Line focuses on issue of coinage

Though there wasn't a capacity crowd, the Firing Line did produce plenty of lively discussion.

President Bush would've been happy. This year's Firing Line seminar was "kinder and gentler" than those of the recent past. Perhaps it was because the parallel issue has been laid to rest; maybe there is simply a better relationship between manufacturers and operators. Whatever the reason, one never got the feeling of sitting on a powder keg.

This is not to say, however, that the less-than-capacity audience came with an "everything's peaches and cream" attitude. There was plenty of lively discussion to quicken the pulse.

The manufacturers were represented by Bill Cravens (Capcom), Joe Dillon (Taito), Frank Ballouz (Fabtek/Irem), Steve Kaufman (Konami), Gil Pollock (Premier), and Rus Strahan (NSM/Loewen-America). Kaufman was the first one to be put on the hot seat.

Operator Robert Szabo of Futuretainment Inc. in San Jose, Calif., wanted to know why monster hit *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* was not shipped from the factory with a 50-cent price setting and 25-cent buy-in. "We (operators) could've made even *more* money that way," he said.

Kaufman said future games would likely be programmed differently.

Firing Line celebrity Bill Johnston of Johnston's General Store in Buffalo, N.Y., complained that Konami was rushing out the Turtles too fast, causing bugs that shouldn't exist. "I'll take them off your hands if you don't want them," joked one operator.

The bulk of the discussion, though, was devoted to the thorny problem of getting more money into operator cashboxes, which would, in turn, allow them to buy more of the manufacturers' games.

Cravens said AAMA, and executive vice president Bob Fay in particular, has continued to push heavily for congressional passage of dollar coin legislation. Too often, Cravens said, the same operators who complain about the need for a dollar coin don't bother attending the Government Affairs Conference in Washington, D.C. (this year, it will be April 29-May 1).

Ballouz said operators who can't make it to Washington should at least write letters to their congressmen and senators. But Cravens didn't buy that, saying, "Operators shouldn't just give lip service to this. It isn't unrealistic to think that everyone here—or anyone concerned, for that matter — can go to Washington. If it means that much to your business, you'll be there. We can pass this if everyone pitches in and does his part."

Szabo commented that if the industry ever gets the dollar coin, he will move all of his games to 50-cent play. All operators should do likewise, he said, or the benefits of the dollar coin would be neutralized. Having operators undercut their 50-cent brethren with quarter play only perpetuates the disjointed pricing problem.

A Canadian operator said he has all of his equipment on *dollar* play, something he's been able to do since Canada instituted the dollar "Loon" coin and discontinued the paper dollar. He's had no problems getting a dollar for pool or pinball (three or four plays, depending on the newness of the game). In fact, Canadian operators report revenue increases of 20 to

25 percent, Cravens said.

Ballouz said that 1994 is the earliest the industry can expect a dollar coin. ''We can't wait that long,'' Ballouz said. In the meantime, operators could test the success of a future dollar coin by using old Susan B. Anthony dollars in their locations. They're available from most banks.

The possibility of reaching a pricing middle ground, say 35 cents per play, was suggested by Dillon. It received a lukewarm response from most operators in attendance. He also wondered if operators should invest in their own bill validators and put them on games that they select, instead of the manufacturers having to decide on a price setting before shipment. ''We could do it, but I know many operators want to make their own pricing choices,'' Dillon said.

Pollock said tests have shown that dollar bill validators are more popular in tavern locations than arcades by a 2 to 1 margin. ''Bar patrons are more willing to put a buck in a particular game than kids in arcades, who want to bounce around from game to game,'' he said.

In the end, though, all three levels of the coin-op industry have to unite on what the coinage is going to be, Dillon said. ''It'll be tough, but we must make a choice,'' he said. ''I know one thing: it's definitely time for U.S. operators to get off of 25-cent play. They deserve more.''

The issue of home games wasn't about to be overlooked. Said Sharon Harris of Stan Harris & Co. in Philadelphia, ''You want to know how to get more coins in the cashbox? Get rid of the home market.'' Cravens said everyone should realize that the home market isn't going to disappear, but added that the craze is showing signs of dying. The evidence, he said, is that a lot of cartridges are stacking up, waiting to be sold.

''The answer is for manufacturers to release better product to the coin-op market, product that can't be duplicated on home systems,'' Cravens said. One operator had another answer for manufacturers: wait at least six months before releasing a coin-op game to the home market. □

SEMINARS

Employee woes draw crowd seeking advice

Operators seeking assistance in handling employee problems gathered for Frank Seninsky's seminar, ''How to get the most out of your employees.'' The session went well over the allotted time as attendees searched for answers to common problems faced in the amusement game business.

Seninsky quoted a national survey which revealed that 66 percent of all American workers said they would work harder if employers treated all employees the same. ''This is a critical point for all owners and managers,'' Seninsky explained. ''Treat everyone equal and be consistent. There's too much time lost in resolving conflicts. It should be a manager's job to eliminate conflict within his company.''

Seninsky said that every employee turnover costs a company $2,000-4,000. This represents the cost of finding a replacement and training that person. Where do you find a suitable employee candidate these days? Seninsky suggested technical schools in an operator's area. Seninsky addresses graduating classes in his locale, something many other businessmen do not do. He has an opportunity to speak to a captured audience and communicate the excitement generated by our industry.

Seninsky suggested several handbooks that provide valuable management information and business forms. One is The Unemployment Compensation Management Training Manual, which covers methods of dealing with employees. He also recommends the Encyclopedia of Personal Letters and Agreements to help with everything from bonus agreements to termination notices.

''Frequent small raises are better than big raises once in a blue moon.''

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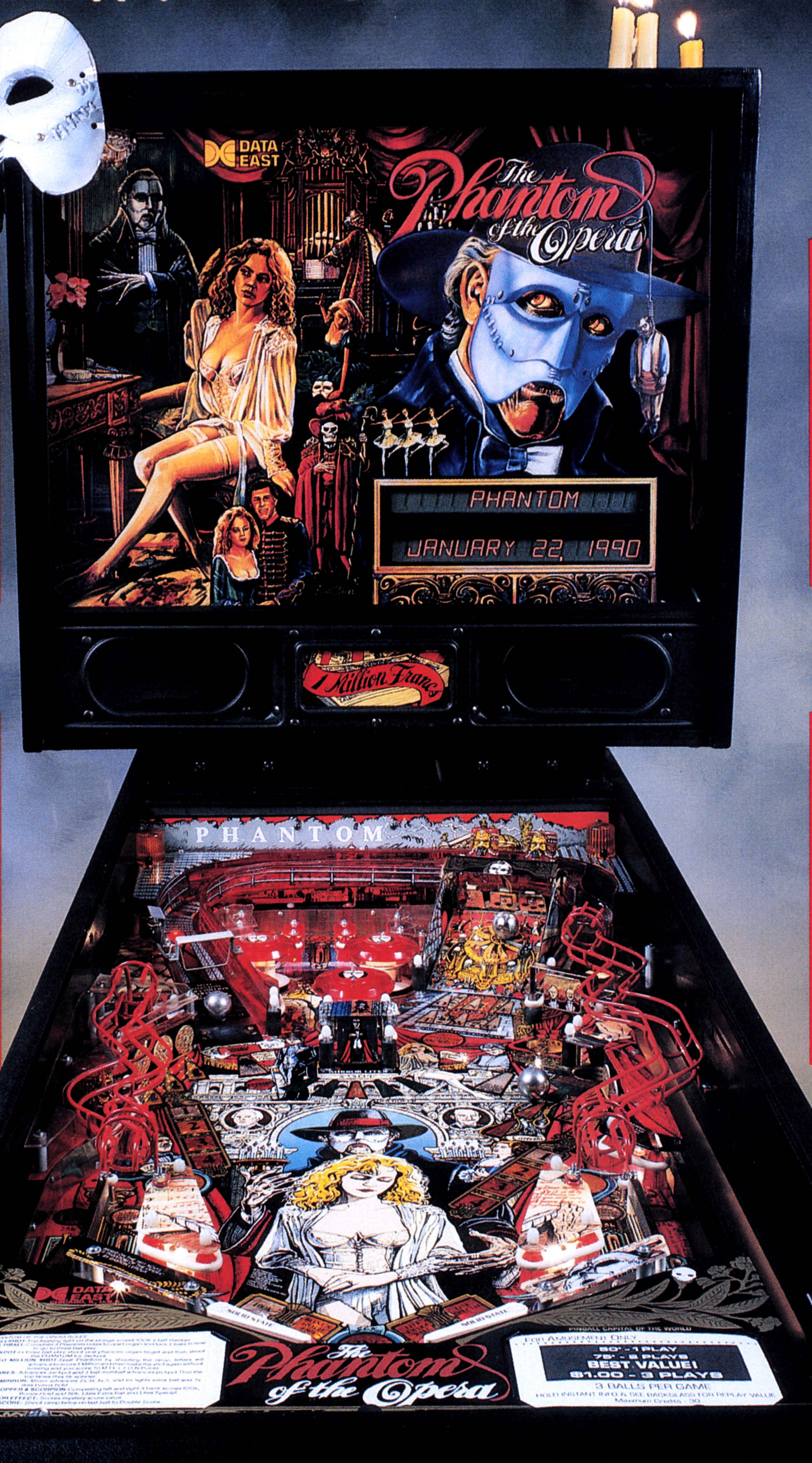
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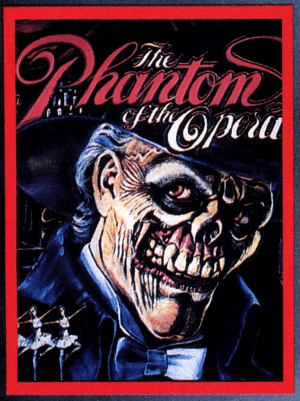
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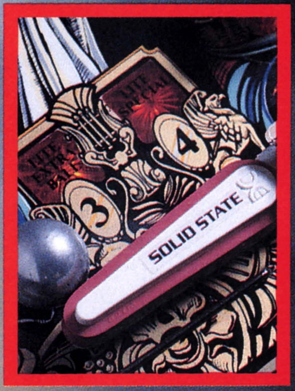
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Seninsky also subscribes to the Alexander Hamilton Institute Manager's Legal Bulletin, which he says can help protect you from lawsuits.

When asked about honesty tests, Seninsky replied that he considers all employees honest until proven otherwise. He advised written warnings to employees who are not performing up to par instead of yelling in the heat of anger. More disciplinary action, such as suspension, may have to be taken later. He believes that everyone should have a second chance. It's been his experience that often an employee who is suspended will do a turnaround, while others may quit or return with a bad attitude.

''It should be a manager's job to eliminate conflict within his company.''

One message rang out clearly: keep detailed paperwork and spell out everything in crystal clear language when establishing policy with employees and when dealing with your locations. He suggests that ''frequent small raises are better than big raises once in a blue moon.'' Employees must feel as though they are a valuable part of the entire operation. Job performance is directly related to this feeling.

''Be sure no one ever leaves your company on a bad note if you can help it,'' says Seninsky. If someone has something bad to say about you he is likely to tell 10 people; if it is something good he tells only three people. Former employees who've had a good relationship with you may feed people into your company later.

Another word of caution: ''Be careful promoting employees. You may move someone up to a management level where he does not function well. It is difficult to gracefully return the employee to his former position; in fact, the situation may take years to resolve.''

Rejoice if an employee is performing exceptionally well. Seninsky added, ''As an owner you must get a thrill from seeing your employees get credit.'' ☐

After the employee seminar, Frank Seninsky (c) trades information with Don Chilcott (l) of Americade Fun Centers in Butler, Pa., and Eric Levin (r) of Regent Vending & Amusements in Ottawa, Ontario.

A full house spelled overtime for the employee seminar.

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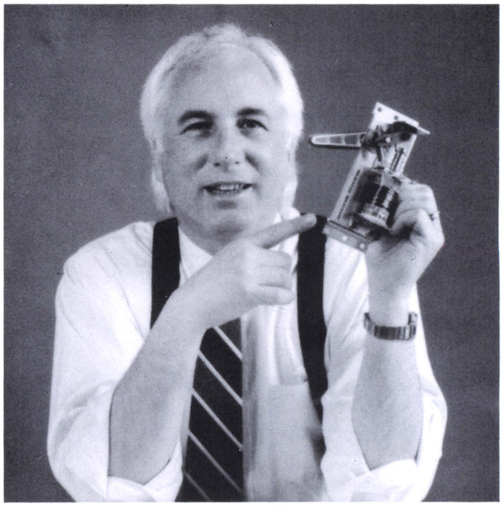

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SEMINARS

Business seminars focus on profits and bank loans

Charles Ross always gets a hefty share of attendees at his business seminars and this year was no exception. He offered serious subjects for discussion: ''Location Profit Analysis,'' and ''So you want to impress your banker?''

In ''Location Profit Analysis,'' Ross emphasized that all operators need to analyze their locations in terms of profits and not just revenues. ''Talking about revenues and not profits has always gotten the amusement industry in trouble. It comes in the form of everything from added taxes down to people entering the business who have no business in the business,'' stated Ross.

He walked the audience through a ''how to'' and ''hot not to'' analysis of locations and arcades. Included was how to allocate costs and calculate ''real depreciation'' and how to determine a true return on investment (ROI).

''Once you know what the ROI is for a machine or a location, then the decision making becomes easier for the purposes of rotating equipment as well as deciding when to buy new equipment and sell off the old junk.''

> ***''Once you know what the ROI is for a machine or a location, then the decision making becomes easier for the purposes of rotating equipment as well as deciding when to buy new equipment and sell off the old junk.''***

Ross took attendees through a one page question and answer session to aid in making the decision to pull out of a location, which is a complicated issue.

Said Ross, ''When the phone rings, many operators load the truck and head out to a new location with equipment. All operators should first analyze the future location in terms of potential profits and potential ROI before even starting the truck.''

In ''So you want to impress your banker?,'' Ross aptly said, ''Before you go to the bank, ask yourself an important question, 'Why do I want to get a bank loan?'''

Ross helped operators increase their chances for such a loan by telling them what the banker wants, and how to present the information in a presentation that would impress the banker.

He also discussed what industry and company information to tell the banker and what information not to divulge. Ross told the audience that ''90 percent of the people who go for a bank loan are not prepared when they sit down across from the banker.''

In the category of ''be prepared,'' Ross listed the ''do's'' and ''don'ts'' of getting a bank loan and showed how a professional bank loan proposal should look when you put it on the banker's desk. ☐

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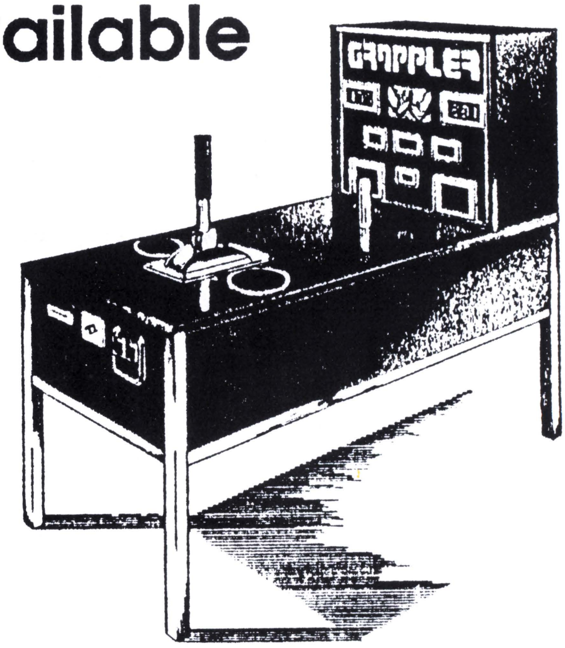

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Joe Robbins honored

Joe's family looks on as Bill Cravens presents Joe with a recognition plaque, (l-r): Larry and Sharon Robbins, Mark Robbins, Joe's sister Barbara, his mother Henrietta, Enid, and Richard Robbins.

The American Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation annually honors one of its own at an appreciation dinner held during ACME. Joe Robbins was this year's honoree. His wife, Enid, was by his side.

Joe Robbins began his illustrious industry career over 40 years ago. He built one of the most impressive distributor organizations, The Bally Group, which included his own company, Empire Distributing. Empire was one of the most successful, respected distributorships in the industry's history.

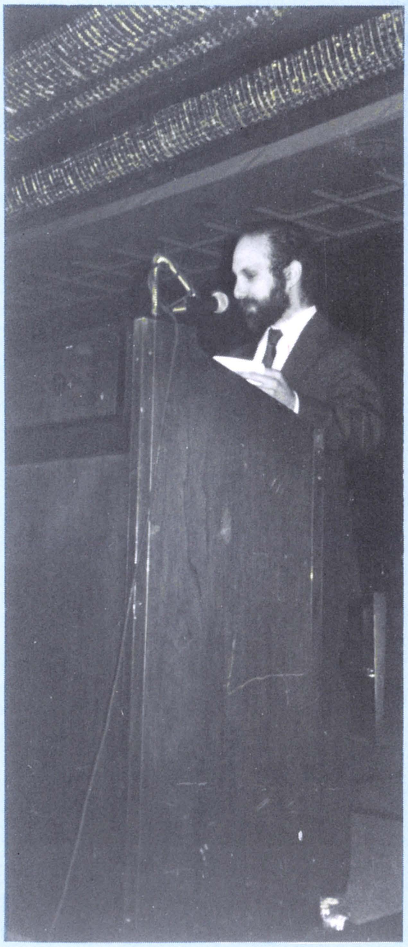
Joe was instrumental in the formation of the manufacturers association, the charitable foundation, and the merging of Play Meter's AOE with the manufacturers' ASI to form the ACME show.

Joe's son Mark, who works for Dynamo Corp., spoke for the family in a glowing speech, pointing out the highlights of his dad's career.

Joe's eyes lit up when he spoke of the industry he has helped nurture. His many memories, and quite a few thank yous, were the focus of his speech. Joe's mother was in the audience; she had just celebrated her 90th birthday the day before. Joe's sister Barbara also traveled to Chicago with her children to see her brother honored. In addition, Joe's stepson, Jeffery Scheer, was in attendance.

During the banquet, AAMA presented achievement awards, voted on by members of AAMA. The winner for ''Factory of the Year'' was Atari; the ''Distributor of the Year'' winner was C.A. Robinson & Co. ☐

The Bettelman family accepted the "Distributor of the Year" award, (l-r): Sandy, Adrea, Leah, and Ira Bettelman.



Joe's son Mark gave an eloquent speech.

Shane Breaks accepts the "Factory of the Year" award from AAMA president Gil Pollock.

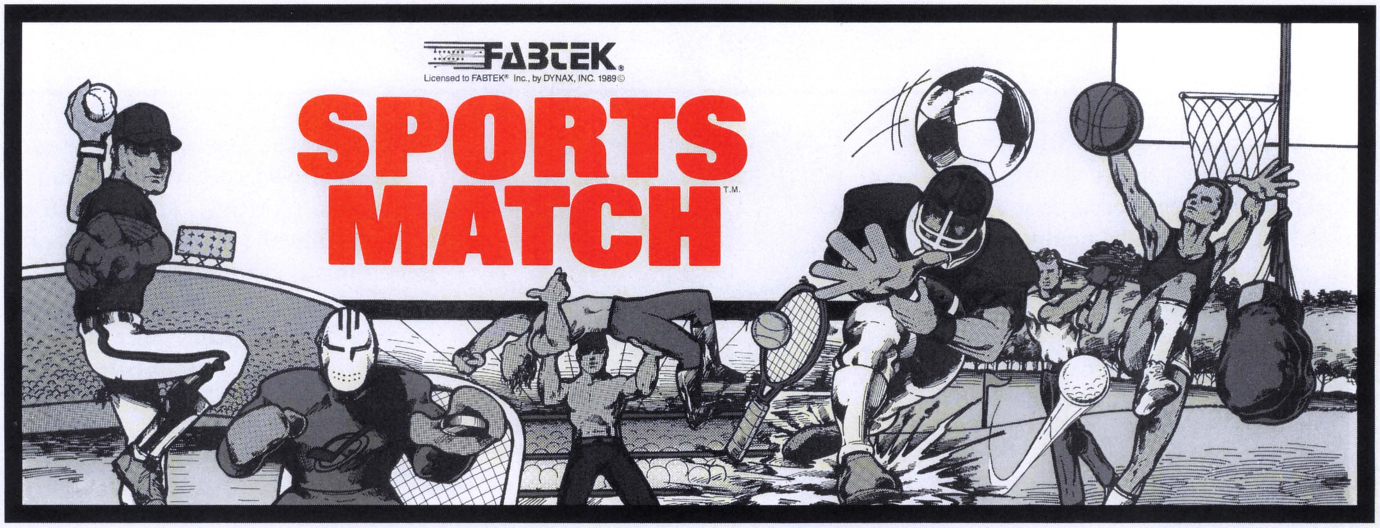
Ralph C. Lally II award goes to Jim Hayes

Jim Hayes accepts the Ralph C. Lally II Award from Play Meter's Valerie Cognevich (l) and Bonnie Theard.

Play Meter magazine, in memory of its founder, Ralph C. Lally II, presented the first Ralph C. Lally II Award to an operator deemed "The Operator of the Year." This year's selection was Jim Hayes of Gem Music in Dayton, Ohio.

Ralph worked for an operator before beginning his magazine in 1974. He felt that there was no way to find out what was going on in the industry, so his goal was to establish a publication to inform operators. Ralph's heart was always with the operator, and many people didn't hesitate to point it out. He was proud of the fact, often saying that the operators were the strongest force within the industry if they could just work together and be involved.

Jim Hayes has been in the industry 20 years and the editors of Play Meter felt he represented the dedication and service to the industry that Ralph always admired. Jim's dad started the company, but Jim sought another career, vowing not to make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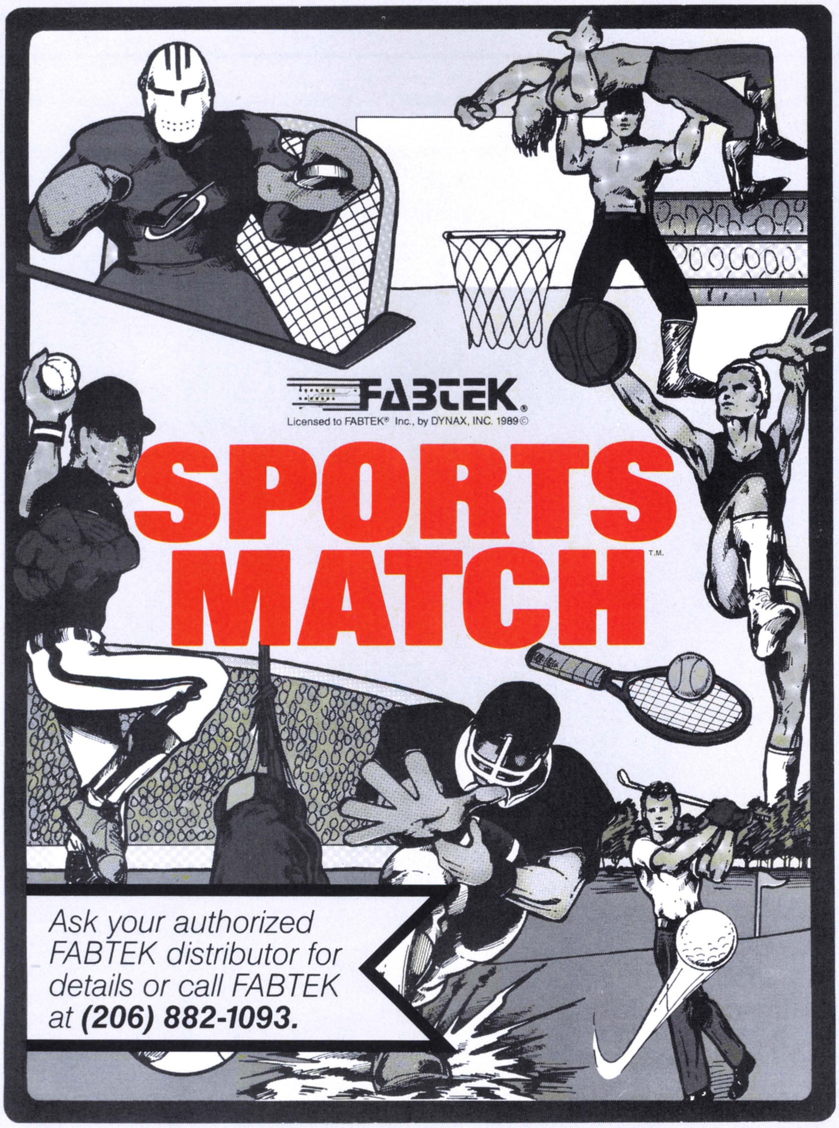
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AWARD
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JIM HAYES

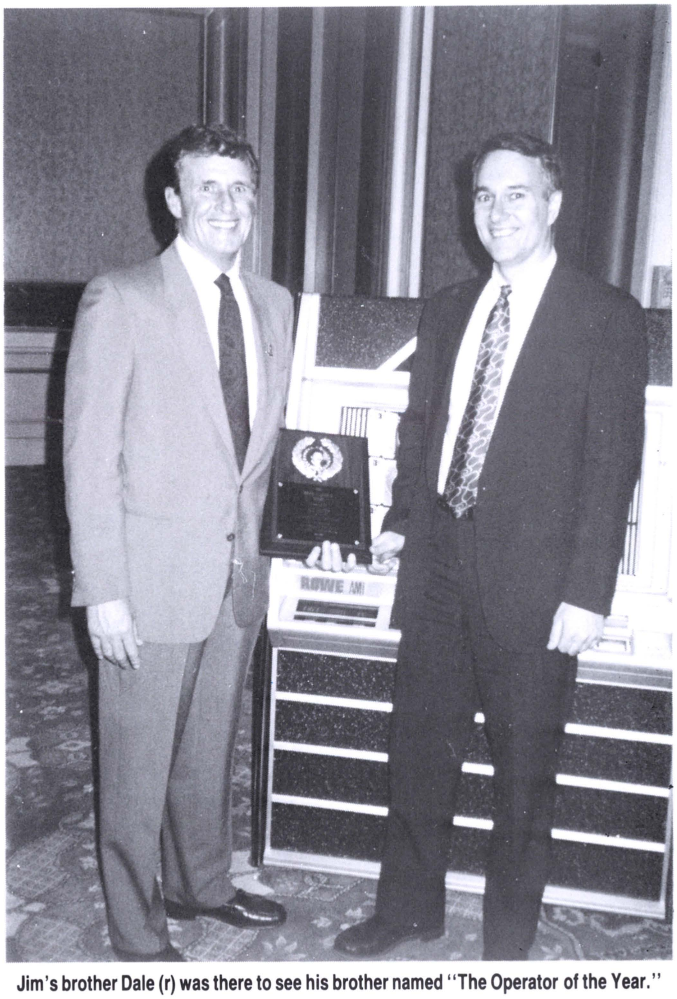
the coin-op industry his life's work. However, he grew tired and frustrated of working for a large corporation and his mom's pleas to join the family business were finally heeded.

Once Jim made the commitment to join his dad, he worked hard. He began attending the AMOA conventions and his state association meetings. Jim became involved with his state association, serving as president. He was active in the national association (AMOA), and worked on many worthwhile committees and projects. Jim was instrumental in organizing the Jukebox Promotion Committee and served as the chairman.

Congratulations, Jim, on being named "Operator of the Year." ☐

"This year's selection was Jim Hayes of Gem Music in Dayton, Ohio."

Jim thanks the industry for all its support.



Jim's brother Dale (r) was there to see his brother named "The Operator of the Year."

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Other ACME highlights

Play Meter, for the 10th year, handed out its Play Meter Awards of Excellence. Each year, beginning with the first AOE show in 1980, Play Meter has asked operators to vote on the manufacturer who has been outstanding in service and quality for the year. This year the winners were, (from left): Leland, represented by Ken Anderson; Sega, represented by Lenore Sayers; Atari, represented by Rich Moore; Williams, represented by Ken Fedesna; Valley, represented by Allan Shafer; and Atari (for best game), represented by Frank Cosentino. Play Meter's Valerie Cognevich is in the center, and the first Ralph C. Lally II award recipient, Jim Hayes, is to the far right.

There was nearly 1,000 years of experience in the coin-op amusement industry in one room when the Half Century Club met during ACME in the Williams suite. Steve Kordek, seated, is the president of the club and asked members for suggestions on what the group could do. Plans are for the group to have a cocktail/buffet reception during the upcoming AMOA in New Orleans. Eddie Adlum, one of the founders along with Steve and Al Rodstein, is working on plans for the event.

AAMA, co-sponsor of the ACME along with Play Meter magazine, awarded trophies for sales excellence to members of its association. The awards were based on sales. Accepting the awards are, (from left): Rich Moore for Atari, Steve Kauffman for Konami, Shane Breaks for Atari, Natalie Kulig for Taito, Rick Rochetti for Taito, Jim Chapman for Taito, Joe Dillon for Taito, and Frank Ballouz for Fabtek/Irem.

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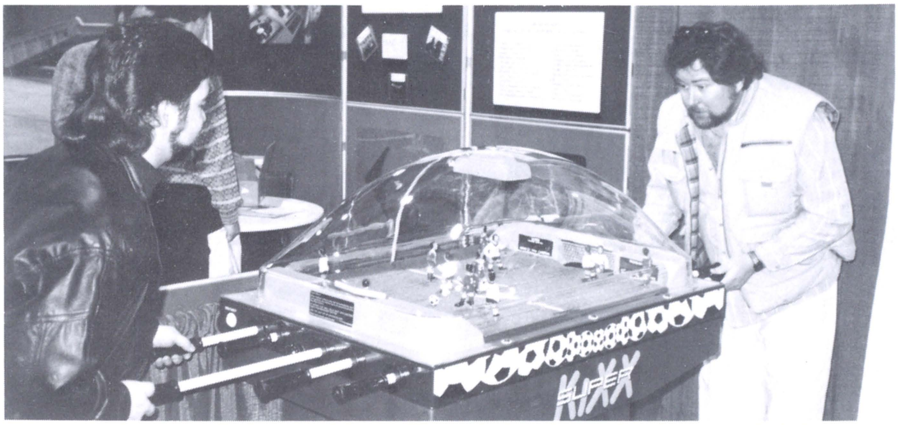
Where do you go to find—under one roof—male strippers, bikini-clad models, casino tables, robots, sound and lighting systems, and assorted coin-op amusement machines? A Las Vegas hotel? Maybe so, but on Feb. 5-7, this assortment of people and things turned up at the Nightclub, Bar, and Restaurant Expo International in Chicago.

Expo attendees, the majority of them location owners or employees, roamed the aisles of the Rosemount/O'Hare Exposition Center in search of products to bolster their businesses. The lion's share of exhibits featured bar/alcohol-related items, promotional products and ideas, lighting and sound products, clothing, and other miscellaneous goods.

The coin-op amusement industry was represented with a handful of booths. Among the companies exhibiting, with the hope that location owners would like their products and ask operators for them, were: A.H. Entertainers, Arachnid, Bean Industries, Carson City Mfg., Innovative Concepts in Entertainment, Pioneer Laser Entertainment, and the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA). The latter booth featured coin-op product from Atari, Sega, Capcom, Valley Recreation Products, Dynamo, and NSM-Loewen.

It was the first NCB Expo for some of the coin-op exhibitors. The floor space wasn't nearly as big as the ACME or AMOA shows, for example, and the traffic at the coin-op booths was nowhere what it would've been had operators been in attendance. Nevertheless, these exhibitors made valuable contact with these location owners, who came from all over the United States. An attendee who gets a first-hand look at a coin-op machine, and is duly impressed, will more than likely be on the phone to his operator, requesting that game/jukebox for his location. ☐

At the AAMA booth, from left: Paul Wiederaenders (Capcom), Kerry Sharman (AAMA), Frank Cosentino (Atari), and Jim Vanderhoof (Sega).



Ron Guarascio Jr. (l) of Paradise Lanes Inc. in Racine, Wis., battles Tom Hermes of Snickers Lounge in Racine on *Super Kixx* by Innovative Concepts in Entertainment.

Operators A.H. Entertainers of Rolling Meadows, Ill., took out a booth at the show. Pictured, (l to r): Chris McSwain of A.H. Entertainers; James O'Connell of Union Lake Sand Bar in Union Lake, Mich.; Chris Hesch of A.H. Entertainers; and Seeburg's Joe Pankus.

Bob Corregan (r) of Valley Recreation Products demonstrates *Quik Poke* to Allen Jacobson (l) and Bernie Marsh of the Esquire Club in Dickinson, N.D.

MISS MY BABY

Pioneer's Dawn Kochel sings a popular song on the company's *Laser Karaoke*.

The Silver Bullet

In front of Arachnid's *Coors Light Silver Bullet Sharpshooter* electronic dart machine are Jason Kina (l) of Kuahao Ventures Inc. in Honolulu, Hawaii, and Arachnid's Sam Zammuto.

Country Classic

Paul Harmon of Carson City Mfg. (l) beside the *SongBird* jukebox with Kim and Chad Winters of the Missouri Territory Restaurant and Bar in Hannibal, Mo.

ENTERTAINMENT & $$$

Dynamo's Mark Robbins (r) gives an air hockey demonstration with Jesse Douty of Fifties Corp./Studebakers in Louisville, Ky. Douty is an 11-time air hockey national champion.

Shari Nichol and Ryan Rischman of Bean Industries with the company's *Lectro Beans*.

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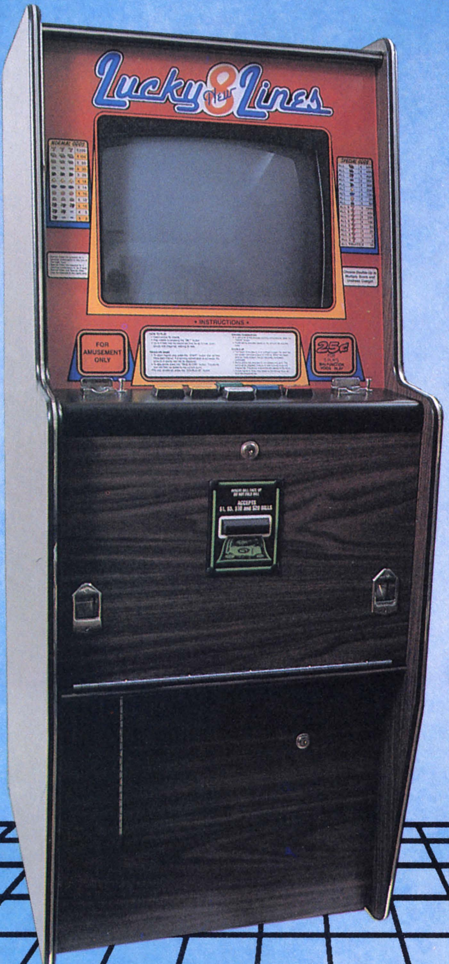
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Dynamo stages tourney in Lone Star State

Peewee's Pizza in Missouri City, Texas, served as the backdrop for the Texas State Air Hockey Championships on Feb. 3-4, co-sponsored by Dynamo, Coin-Op Video Games Inc., All Prime Amusements, Peewee's, and other local businesses. The tournament awarded $2,000 in cash and prizes.

Current national champion Tim Weissman of Houston captured his first Texas state title. He did not lose a set along the way. Two-time national champion and current Colorado champion Mark Robbins was Weissman's toughest challenger; he placed second.

Houston's Robert Hernandez, a five-time Texas champion, took third place. Finishing fourth through sixth were, respectively, Vince Schappell of Houston, Albert Ortiz of Houston, and Mike Barry of Philadelphia.

The city of Houston was also well-represented by natives in three other categories. First place in the Pro B division went to Don Bearden. Don James took expert honors, while Allison Rabinowitz prevailed in the amateur competition.

The tournament was organized by Connie Rector of the U.S. Air-Table-Hockey Association, with assistance from David Slavin of Coin-Op Video Games. The latter operates three Dynamo air hockey tables in the location.

For information on air hockey tournaments and promotions at the regional and national level, contact Mark Robbins at Dynamo, (800) 527-6054 or (817) 589-7699. ☐

Tournament champion Tim Weissman (l) competes against Robert Hernandez, who finished third.

AIR HOCKEY TOURNAMENT
FEB. 3 & 4, 1990
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HOCKEY
CHAMPIONSHIPS

Pictured, (l to r): Don Bearden, Allison Rabinowitz, Tim Weissman, Don James, and David Slavin.

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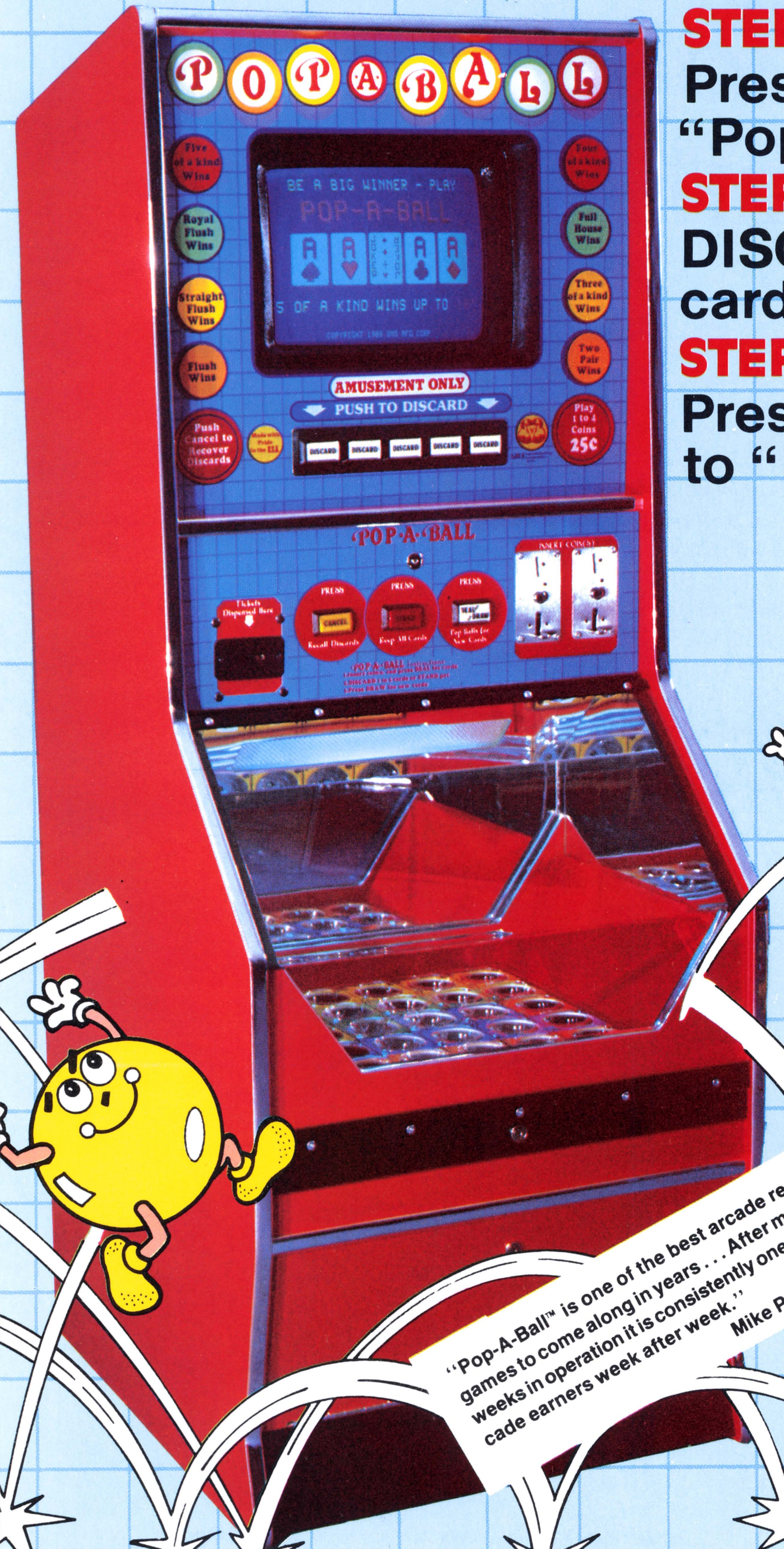
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DISCARD
POP-A-BALL
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Pop All Cards
DEAL/DRAW
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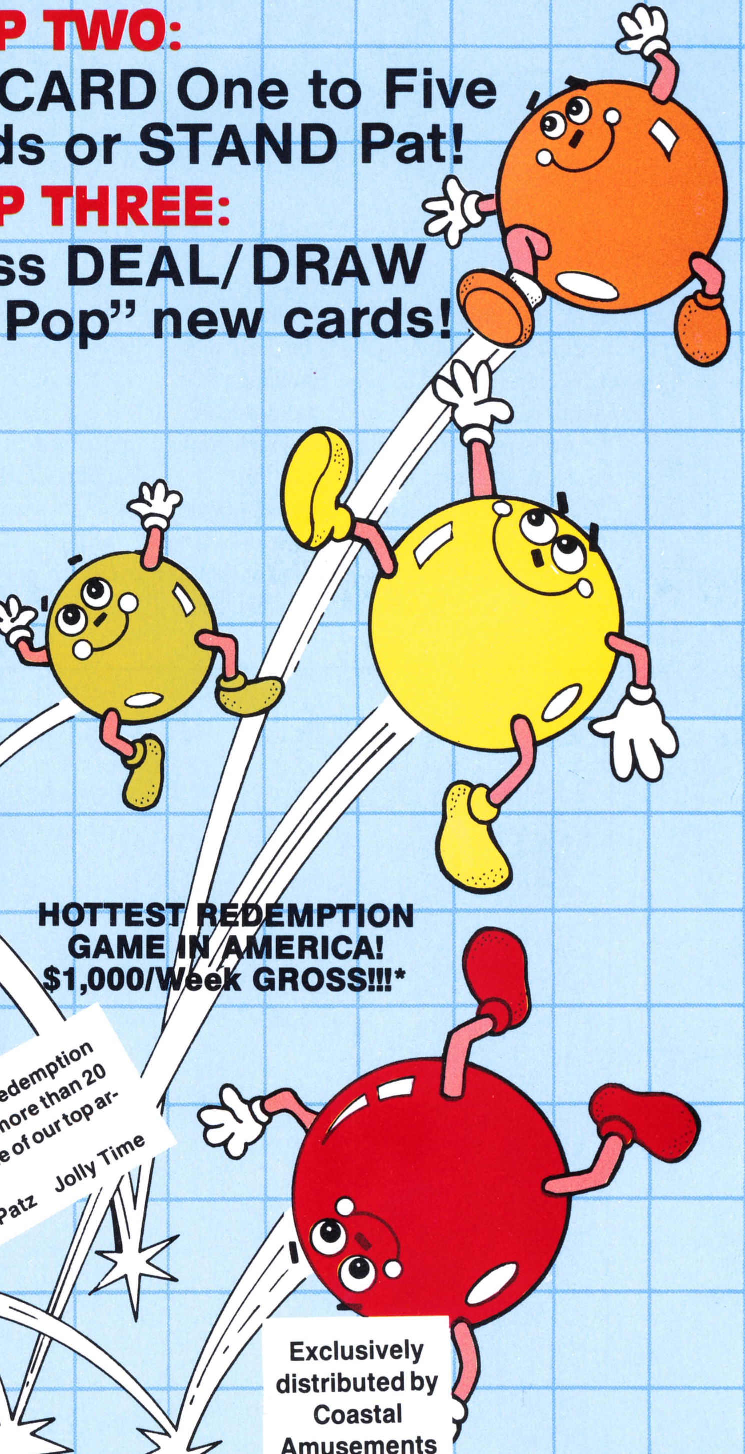
STEP ONE:
Press DEAL/DRAW to "Pop" cards!

STEP TWO:
DISCARD One to Five cards or STAND Pat!

STEP THREE:
Press DEAL/DRAW to "Pop" new cards!



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BullShooter Tour pays visit to Ohio

Arachnid Inc. continued its $135,000 BullShooter V Dart Tour with a stop in Columbus, Ohio, on Jan. 6-7. Cleveland Coin Machine Exchange and Shaffer Distributing Co. co-sponsored this $5,000 qualifying regional, which took place at the Columbus Holiday Inn.

The eight-event tournament was played on *English Mark Darts* electronic dart machines. It drew competitors from Ohio, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Virginia, and New York.

Barb Hall of New Albany, Indiana was the weekend's big winner. She took first place in Women's Singles, first place in Mixed Cricket with Charlie Coomer, second place in Mixed Doubles with Jeff Poindexter, and third place in Women's Doubles with Ruth Merideth.

The Pro 301 Double In/Double Out event, comprised of the best players from the area, was won by Rocko Wojnowski of Buffalo, N.Y.

All of the first, second, and third place winners in the eight events won qualifying certificates for entry into the BullShooter finals over Memorial Day weekend, May 26-28. This culminating event boasts a payout of $40,000. It takes place at the Chicago Holiday Inn/O'Hare in Rosemont, Ill.

For more information on the tour, call (800) 435-8319 or (815) 654-0212. ☐

14
Arachnid
20
1
18
4
13
6
10
15
5
12
9
14
11
8
16
Barb

Barb Hall took two first, one second, and one third place finish at the Columbus BullShooter tournament.

31
Arachnid
20
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2
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16
7
19
3
17

Buffalo's Rocko Wojnowski (r) with Steve Johnson, member of the Arachnid A Team.

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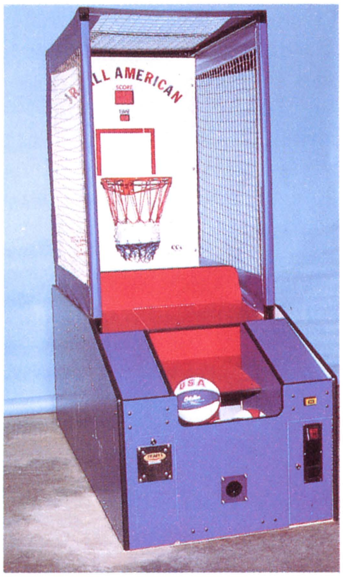

JR. ALL AMERICAN

A pint size version of the ever popular basketball game, Coin Concepts presents the Jr. All American. Dimensions are 84" deep, 33" wide and 78" high. Some game features include digital readouts for time and score, ticket and free play optional settings, and selectable coinage. The heavy duty construction will withstand years of constant use.

WINNER
TOSS EM
50
40
30
20
10

TOSS EM

Coin Concepts' exciting new kiddie game that's not just for kids. A game that has no rules for playing! The dimensions of 60" deep, 34" wide and 74" high fit all space conscious locations. Features include a basic game presentation for immediate player recognition, attractive graphics and sound, multiple ticket award levels, winner strobe lights and four coinage levels including free play. An absolute winner.

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This colorful, eyecatching new one player coin pusher by the KW Systems is loaded with high earning bonus features. Players control the slide coin entry and playfield movement. The flexibility of the features make this game acceptable in most locals. Dimensions are 25" deep, 72-1/2" high and 29" wide. A special sized promotional token issued by an adjustable bonus feature makes Starburst a favorite for the players. Starburst's meters, tilt alarm, ticket and/or token capability, and wider play field design makes the Starburst a favorite for the operators.

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READER'S RESPONSE

OPERATORS: This column is devoted to you. It is your chance to have your voice heard on the state of the industry. We welcome all complaints, compliments, and comments. We will print your letters as received, when possible. We would appreciate it if you would refrain from sending a scathing letter about a specific manufacturer. Instead, we would like your general observations on the industry. Your name will not be used if you prefer. Take a few moments to share your thoughts with the rest of the coin-operated entertainment industry. There is a self-addressed sheet waiting for you to fill out and return to us.

Keep them coming

I just finished reading the Half Century Club Interview and wanted to tell you that it was super. These guys are truly the roots of our industry; I can't read enough about the early days.

I think that Valerie does a great job in all of her interviews, but this one with Al Rodstein was extra special. I'm eagerly waiting for the next one and the one after that.

New York, NY

Wasted boards

It is such a waste to have to trash a perfectly good PC board when installing a kit. Resale is a waste of time due to no market for used boards.

I would like to see the manufacturers just issue kits with software or, if necessary, satellite boards for the main PCB. I assume that they make more profit by forcing an entire PCB down our throats every time.

Disgusted in San Diego

Half Century Club

In regard to the Half Century Club Interview, it is a wonderful addition to the magazine. I know a few gentlemen that have been in the coin-op business for many years and I enjoy listening to their stories.

Now I can read some interesting stories from people I have never met, or maybe met casually at a show or something. I met Al Rodstein once and was impressed with him. After reading his story I have a new respect for him. It's not too many people that will admit they didn't go to college. Yet it is stories like this that are an inspiration.

I am anxiously awaiting the next interview. Couldn't you do more than one at a time!

Phoenix, AZ

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A WORD FROM OUR READERS!!!

An operator challenged us to provide space and invite everyone in the coin machine business to write about what is right, wrong, or can be corrected within the industry. OK, here's the space. Now it's up to all of you to fill it with comments on the industry. We will not print your name if you so request, but we will print your comments just as you have them. The operator suggested running the page for three issues, but we will leave it indefinitely if you continue to send your opinions.

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Seeburg shuts its doors

Ten years ago, Seeburg Corp. announced plans to temporarily shut its doors at the behest of a court-appointed trustee. Stemming the flow of dwindling assets for investors and creditors was cited as the reason for the move. The company, noted the trustee, owed more than $4 million in unsecured creditors. Stern tendered an offer of $1 million to acquire Seeburg jigs, dies, patents, tools, and parts, but the offer was deemed too low.

Cinematronics filed a suit against Atari for patent infringement. Specifically named in the suit as the alleged infringement was Atari's newest X-Y monitor game, *Asteroids*. Cinematronics was seeking an injunction to stop Atari from manufacturing the game.

The Copyright Office reported a decrease in jukebox registrations. The number was down by 10,333, and the number of operators who filed was down by about 350 when compared to 1978 figures.

In other news 10 years ago, Paul Jacobs joined Universal U.S.A. as its executive vice president; "Midnight Madness," an adventure film from Disney studios, featured Exidy's *Star Fire* video game in a significant role; Universal Amusement Distributors introduced a test fixture for Bally and Stern flipper games; Dynamo increased its production capacity with the addition of 25,000 square feet of space; and Atari was catching flak about an ad it ran about its home video games, featuring the line, "We are doing everything we can to get those long lines of people out of the arcades and into your store."

Play Meter's top tunes included "Him," "Too Hot," "99," "Desire," "Longer," "Another Brick in the Wall," "Working My Way Back To You," "How Do I Make You," "On The Radio," and "Back on My Feet Again."

Roger Sharpe's "Critic's Corner" column featured Bally's *Nitro Ground Shaker*, Williams' *Laser Ball*, and Gottlieb's *Torch*. The games featured in "New Products" were *Galaxy Wars* by Universal, *Space Zap* by Game-a-Tron, *Rolling Crash* by Nichibutsu, and *Firepower* by Williams. ☐

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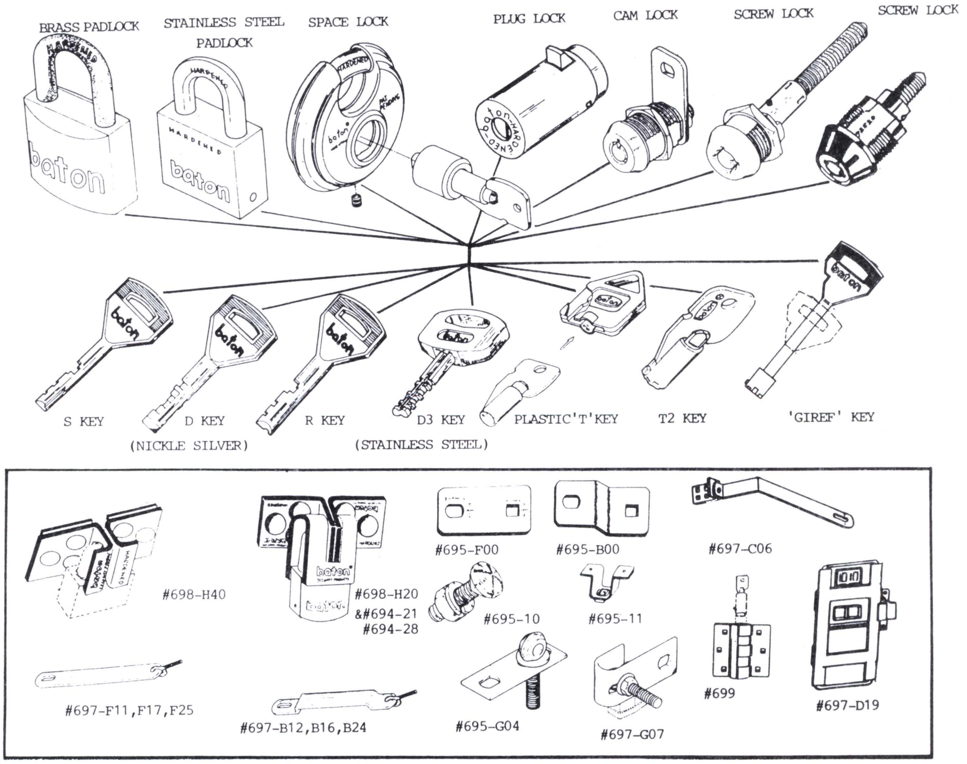
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TOP TWENTY

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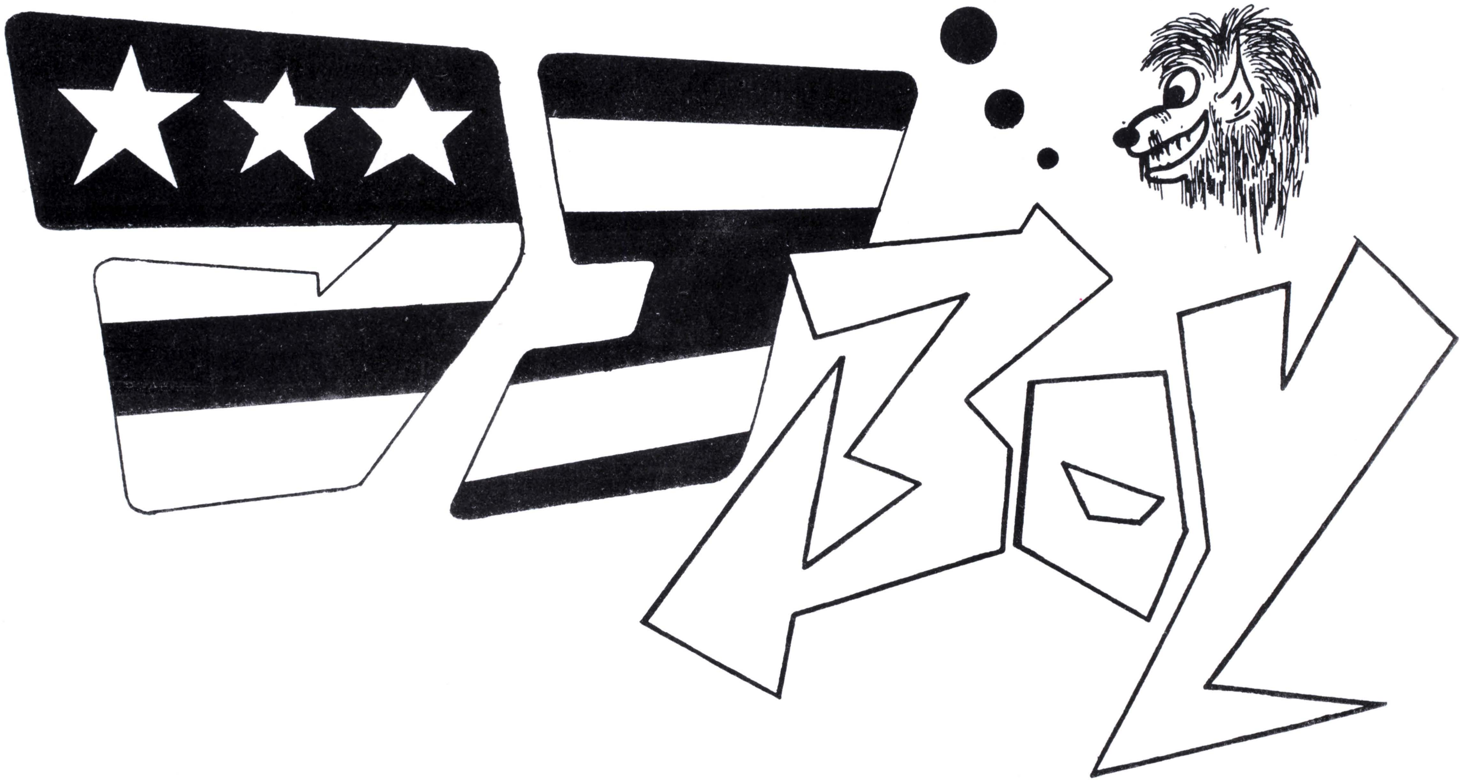
HOT SINGLES

TITLE	Label & Number/Distributing Label	ARTIST
1. Escapade	A&M 1490	Janet Jackson
2. Dangerous	EMI 50233	Roxette
3. Opposites Attract	Virgin 7-99158	Paula Abdul
4. Roam	Reprise 7-22667	The B-52s
5. All Or Nothing	Arista 9923	Milli Vanilli
6. Here We Are	Epic 34-73084	Gloria Estefan
7. Price Of Love	Epic 34-73094	Bad English
8. We Can't Go Wrong	Capitol 44498	The Cover Girls
9. Black Velvet	Atlantic 7-88742	Alannah Myles
10. No More Lies	Ruthless 7-99149/Atco	Michel'le
11. I Go To Extremes	Columbia 38-73091	Billy Joel
12. Too Late To Say Goodbye	EMI 50234	Richard Marx
13. C'mon And Get My Love	FFRR 886 798-4/Polydor	D-Mob
14. Just A Friend	Cold Chillin' 7-22784/Warner Bros.	Biz Markie
15. Love Will Lead You Back	Arista 9938	Taylor Dayne
16. Two To Make It Right	Vendetta 1464/A&M	Seduction
17. What Kind Of Man Would I Be?	Reprise 7-22741	Chicago
18. No Myth	RCA 9111	Michael Penn
19. I Wish It Would Rain Down	Atlantic 7-88738	Phil Collins
20. Sometimes She Cries	Columbia 38-73300	Warrant

COMPACT DISCS

TITLE	Label & Number/Distributing Label	ARTIST
1. Forever Your Girl	Virgin 2-90943	Paula Abdul
2. ...But Seriously	Atlantic 82050-2	Phil Collins
3. Janet Jackson's Rhythm Nation 1814	A&M CD 3920	Janet Jackson
4. Cosmic Thing	Reprise 2-25854/Warner Bros.	The B-52s
5. Storm Front	Columbia CK44366	Billy Joel
6. Girl You Know It's True	Arista ARCD 8592	Milli Vanilli
7. Full Moon Fever	MCA MCAD 6253	Tom Petty
8. Alannah Myles	Atlantic 81956-2	Alannah Myles
9. Back On The Block	Qwest 2-26020/Warner Bros.	Quincy Jones
10. Pump	Geffen GHS2-24254	Aerosmith
11. Journeyman	Duck 2-26074/Reprise	Eric Clapton
12. Cry Like A Rainstorm	Elektra 60872-2	Linda Ronstadt
13. Live	Arista A2CD-8613	Kenny G
14. Soul Provider	Columbia CK 45012	Michael Bolton
15. World Beat	Epic EK46010	Kaoma
16. Dance...Ya Know It!	MCA MCAD-6342	Bobby Brown
17. Cuts Both Ways	Epic EK 45217	Gloria Estefan
18. Look Sharp!	EMI E2-91098	Roxette
19. Pump Up The Jam	SBK CDP-93422	Technotronic
20. Nick Of Time	Capitol C2-91268	Bonnie Raitt

"THIS GAME IS HIP, WHAT A TRIP! THAT DJ BOY IS ON A ROLL!"



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Transferring your business by gifts: delight or disaster?

The life cycle of a successful closely held business usually goes through three phases. The first phase is survival. Then, you build the business. Finally, after years of hard work you realize the business is valuable and that you had better transfer it to the kids, or the IRS will get a bigger share than your family. It is this third phase of the cycle that can cost the business owner and his family the most tax dollars. Remember, the gift and estate tax rates go up to 55 percent. Put another way, your family only keeps 45 cents out of every dollar of your business value.

Is there a way to beat this high tax cost? Yes. And the most popular way has been, and continues to be, lifetime gifts to the kids of the stock of your closely held corporation. You can give $10,000 to each of your children or grandchildren every year. Double the amount to $20,000 if you are married. Not only do you remove the $10,000 (or $20,000) from your estate, but as the corporation (and the stock) continues to grow in value, the growth is also removed from your estate. Now that's a great deal—a real tax delight.

But suppose you make a gift of common stock to your kids and keep a ''retained interest'' in the corporation? In such circumstances, the IRS has a new super weapon created by Section 2036(c). This section can sweep a valid gift, as described above, back into your estate to be taxed at its fair market value at the date of your death. That's right—even though the kids have legally owned the stock for many years, the IRS can still tax its value in your estate. This is a tax disaster. The most common ways of triggering the retained interest rule is for you or your spouse to take too much salary, interest, or rent out of the corporation.

''The IRS has a new super weapon created by Section 203(c).''

The purpose of this item is not to explain every trap, exception or opportunity under Section 2036(c), which is a complicated monster. My purpose is to warn you that a valid gift of stock to your children will not reduce your estate taxes if Section 2036(c) is violated. You must get expert help before making a gift of your business to any of your children or grandchildren, whether they are active in the business or not.

We have received so many questions from our readers about what to do and how to do it since Section 2036(c) has become law, that we decided to do something about it. Our CPA firm, Blackman Kallick Bartelstein, has created the Family Business Transfer Institute (FBTI). For more information, just write ''FBTI Seminar'' on an envelope and send it to 300 South Riverside Plaza, Chicago, IL 60606. ☐

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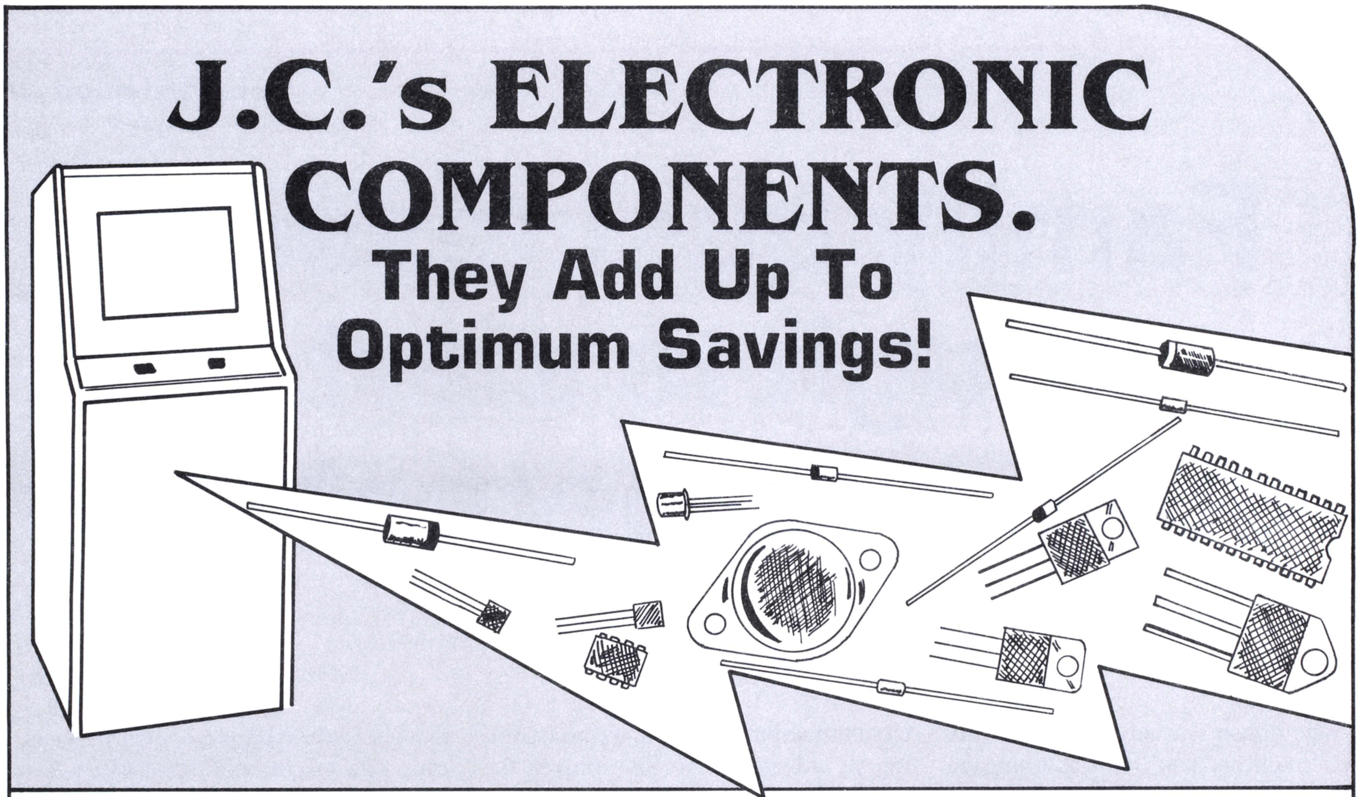

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74LS00	.13	74LS299	.65	74367	.20	CD4024	.25	1N4732A	.07	1N4747A	.07	1N4004	.03	MPSa92	.11
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74LS05	.13	7400	.13	7808CT	.20	CD4520	.40	1N4737A	.07	1N4751A	.07	2N222A	.15	2732	1.61
74LS08	.13	7401	.13	7915CT	.20	CD4584	.24	1N4739A	.07			22N3055	.41	2764	1.61
74LS157	.20	7402	.13	7918CT	.20	**Timer**		1N4740A	.07	1N5404	.11	2N2219A	.26	27128	1.82
74LS161	.20	7405	.16	**C MOS**		LM555	.20	1N4741A	.07	1N5408	.12	TIP41A	.30	27256	2.10
74LS174	.14	7428	.20	CD4000	.13			1N4742A	.07			TIP42C	.30	27512	5.50
74LS244	.25	7430	.13	CD4001	.14			1N4743A	.07	1N4001	.03	TIP120	.33		

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Family businesses: tough to start, tougher to perpetuate

One doesn't usually associate the ''mom and pop'' shop adorning the corner down the street with big time business. But it is. Indeed, small business is *big* business.

In the United States, closely held businesses, many owned and operated by families, comprise almost one-half of the country's GNP. Approximately one-third of the current listings in Fortune 500 are closely held, family businesses. Yet, very few family businesses survive into a second generation. Even fewer see the third. The reason for this remains perplexingly unaddressed, even in this age of computerized analysis.

The primary reason for the inability of a closely held, family business to perpetuate is a failure to adequately plan.

These types of businesses are typically founded by strong-willed, driven entrepreneurs who enjoy the thrill and challenge of work. They are also somewhat autocratic and tend to give little consideration to delegation, delineation of responsibility, personnel assessment, and teaching. Thus, a failure to formulate long-term plans with regard to the continuity of the business often results.

In many cases, this lack of consideration is attributed to the presence of spouses, children, or other family members in the employee ranks of the business, or in influential positions outside of the business structure.

The business and personal estate planning for the founders of small businesses are thus inexorably intertwined. The failure to take this fact into account and plan accordingly, unfortunately, maximizes the potential for unnecessary transfer tax.

It also increases the chance that the business built through the founder's sweat and blood will soon follow that founder to the hereafter. Timely, appropriate planning can minimize these results.

Obviously, planning for perpetuation of the business should provide for passage of the torch at the lowest possible tax cost. But it involves much more. In fact, the usage of an expert in the areas of taxation and estate planning is merely a prerequisite for this process to be successful.

Along the way, the founder should also consider the identity and suitability of the future equity owners, as well as the types of equity each should receive, considering factors such as each future owner's involvement or non-involvement in the business.

Assessments of personnel, including children and their spouses, whether or not currently involved in the business, are essential to the planning process. However, the founder should first determine whether the business should be continued or be sold. If the decision is to continue, the founder must decide who will take over so that the persons chosen may receive the necessary additional training to ensure a smooth transition.

Ideally, the assessment process should openly involve all employees and members of the founder's family, including those not currently involved in the business. Foregoing the input and thoughts of these people, as often happens, causes the loss of information valuable to the decisions regarding continuation. The results of these assessments are oftentimes very revealing and frequently have real current value to the business.

The failure to inform the persons to be most affected by the plans made until the time of their ultimate implementation causes miscommunication and uncertain results. This happens all too often, because the plans have been historically formulated behind closed doors and contained in a will, the contents of which are rarely shared with the family or employees during lifetime.

A closely held, family business should undergo planning processes and deliberations in order to ensure its perpetuation, as well as passage of the torch at the lowest possible monetary and emotional cost. Competent professional advice relative to estate planning tools, including wills, revocable trusts, buy-sell agreements and lifetime gifts is essential to the success of this process.

However, perpetuation of the family's secret to success involves much more. It necessitates real introspection and consideration of inevitable change in a dynamic technological world, as distasteful as that may seem. Timely, proper planning will maximize the goal of keeping the family business intact, healthy, and ''all in the family'' after the founder is no longer around. ☐

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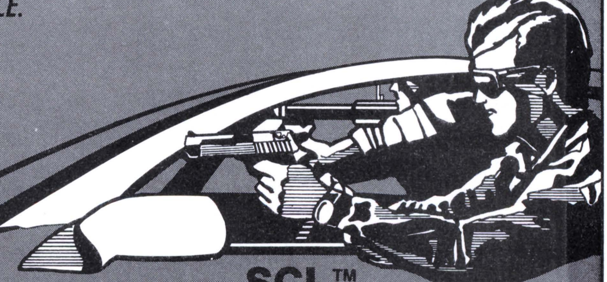

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Boyd Franks

Pinbawls

Or how to repair a pinball when you don't have a schematic

"Pinballs are neat; they make lots of money. Pinballs are terrible; we can't keep them fixed."

These are the two most common statements I hear about pinballs. My personal opinion is that pinballs are neat and quite profitable, especially in rural environments. Around here, country folks dig pinball better than video. Also, I enjoy repairing pinballs. To me, they are very easy to fix. I never met a pinball I didn't like.

Understanding the components

It helps to understand how most modern computer-driven pinballs work (those made after 1976). A typical pinball will have ROM, RAM, static RAM, a microprocessor, in/out (I/O) devices, amplifiers, drivers, coils, lights, switches, and often a sound board with its own microprocessor and associated circuitry, plus a power supply.

Knowing what these devices do is very important if you are to figure out what is at fault when a problem occurs.

What is the ROM?

A ROM is a Read Only Memory. The ROM stores the information that tells the pinball that it is a pinball, and provides the rules for how the game is to be played. There are one or more ROMs in a game. ROMs fail, but not frequently.

ROMs often have little windows on them, covered with tape. Only ROMs from the exact same socket location will work properly when replacing one. Bizarre game behavior will result if they are interchanged any other way.

What is the RAM?

The RAM is a Random Access Memory. The RAM is required for the computer to store the results of its computations. It can be thought of as a scratch pad full of calculations that are continuously being changed and updated. A common RAM in some pinballs is a 6810.

The static ram is a special ram in some pinballs that stores memory even with the power off. It is the reason for the battery in most pinballs. The static ram is the place where the information that you program in is stored. Such information includes the number of balls in a game, points required to win, high score, etc. A typical RAM is a 5101.

If you have a game that won't hold the program you put in after the power is turned off, it could be a weak battery or the static RAM that is the culprit. If the battery voltage is below 3.6 volts with the power off, the battery is your problem. If it is above 3.6 volts, the static RAM is your problem.

The static RAM is also your problem if you are unable to get the game to accept the numbers you program in. Changing the battery will dump all of the programming in the static RAM and it will have to be programmed all over again; that is, unless you solder the new batteries across the old ones before taking the old ones out. Be sure to put them in correctly. If you put the battery in backwards, the reverse polarity will destroy the static RAM IC.

The microprocessor is literally a computer on a chip, or at least a whole lot of it. It is the "brains" of your game. A typical microprocessor might be a 6800 on a pinball. A game that fails to "power up" properly can sometimes have a defective microprocessor.

This can easily be checked by taking a known good microprocessor out of a working game and swapping it out. Be sure you plug it in correctly. If you plug it in backwards you can damage it. Also be careful not to be bend the pins; they usually bend underneath where you can't see them. The best thing to do is to use a 40-pin IC insertion tool. Radio Shack has them.

Other causes of failure to power up are voltage loss somewhere (check all voltages) and defective in/out (I/O) devices.

I/O devices

A typical I/O device is a 6820 or 6821 Periphial Interface Adaptor (PIA). This is a 40-pin IC like the microprocessor. The PIA is the computer's connection to the real world. In a typical pinball, one or more PIAs may do nothing but read switches to see whether they are opened or closed. Other PIAs may do nothing but provide an output signal, which when amplified enough, will drive a solenoid coil to a thumper bumper, light, etc.

PIAs fail more frequently than microprocessors do. If you have a PIA type 6820 in an old pinball and it fails, don't replace it with another 6820. Instead, replace it with a 6821. The two are interchangeable, but the 6821 is more reliable.

For some reason, the buffer ICs that isolate the switch inputs from the 6821 PIAs go bad frequently. The 7408 and gates are usually the bad guys here. A PIA won't drive a solenoid coil directly; the current is far too small. When the computer tells a coil to turn on, it signals the correct pin on the correct PIA to turn on.

This tiny signal in turn may be fed into a 74154 four- to 16-line decoder, which takes four encoded lines from the PIA and directs them into 16 separate command signals for 16 coils.

"Only ROMs from the exact same socket location will work properly when replacing one. Bizarre game behavior will result if they are interchanged any other way."

The 74154 fails frequently and is the cause of some very strange symptoms, such as multiple or wrong thumper bumpers coming on when a ball strikes a switch.

The signal leaves the 74154 and goes into an amplifier such as a CA3081. It is an array of seven transistors in an IC package. It boosts the current to a still larger level. This amplified signal then drives the driver transistor, such as an SE9302, which then switches on with enough current to drive a solenoid.

And now, how does it all work?

Remember ROM? When the power is first turned on, the microprocessor automatically switches to read Step 1 in the ROM and follows a set sequence of instructions to put the game into the attract mode.

A coin inserted into the game closes a switch, which is scanned by the PIA and fed into the microprocessor. The microprocessor then follows instructions programmed into ROM and static RAM.

As the game play progresses, and more switches are closed, the microprocessor outputs various signals through the various PIAs. It then sends signals that, when amplified, pull in coils or are routed to the sound board computer (if it has one) that determines what sounds to play. Sound programs are stored in the sound board computer ROMs, if the game has them.

A typical problem

What's the most likely problem to happen? A burned coil. The coil wasn't any good, right? Wrong. The computer killed it. The typical story I run into goes like this:

The operator finds a burned coil. He orders one and changes it. This means down time while waiting for the coil. The operator replaces the burned coil with a new one. The pinball still doesn't work.

The new coil pulls in and locks. The machine still has a problem.

The operator pulls the solenoid driver board, takes it to the distributor, gets it fixed, and brings it back. More down time. The operator then plugs the board back in. The new coil he put in earlier has been burned out by the old bad board and now it blows the repaired board. Result: more down time and lots of cussing. The operator then makes a mental note to use his pinball for a boat anchor in the nearest lake.

There is a quick and sure cure for the problem. Take the following steps and eliminate this headache.

1. Change the coil. Make sure the diode band is correct; you will blow a fuse if it isn't.
2. Change the appropriate driver transistor. Hint: look for a tiny bead of solder sweated out of the top of one of the driver transistors. It's a dead giveaway to which one is burned out.
3. Change the appropriate pre-driver transistor array, such as the CA3081. You can find it by following the traces from the blown driver transistor on the driver board.
4. Change out the 74154 four- to 16-line decoder on the driver board, if there is one.
5. Change out the PIA that drives the 74154 (it's a 6820 or 6821) on the MPU board.
6. Change out the 6800 microprocessor on the MPU board.
7. Inspect solder joints on the rear of the MPU board and driver board. Repair any cracks around plug terminals on the board.

This may sound drastic but it's economical. The total parts cost is only a few dollars. The labor spent is less than the time it takes to drive out to the machine a second time. The cure is totally effective. I'm still waiting for my first call back.

What you have done here is totally change out the parts involved in the entire signal path, from the microprocessor to the coil. Only one of the parts was bad, but you have given total reliability to your repair by eliminating all the possible causes of the original problem. And you haven't wasted $50 worth of time looking for a $2 part. In this business, economics and reliability are everything. Good luck. And may you make lots of money with your pinballs from now on. ☐

If you have any questions or need more information, write Boyd Franks, Video Repair School, P.O. Box 121, Glen, MS 38846; (601) 287-1594.

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Tim Wolfe

Turtles score big with young players

The kids all over have really been swept by *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. This is the first video game I can remember since *Star Wars* that really has young players captivated as a result of a motion picture (a cartoon, in this case). I could see why after watching the ''heroes in the half-shell'' a few times and then playing the Konami video game.

The story goes something like this: Five expert Ninjitsu warriors are changed into animals as a result of some radioactive material falling into the sewer and coming into contact with them. Four are turtles and one is a rat; the rat, Splinter, is the Turtles' Master leader. There is also a fair-haired reporter named April. She is always getting into jams in the cartoon and in need of rescue. The Turtles all have their own personalities in the cartoon, as well as their own unique armament in both the cartoon and video game.

Leonardo is the leader of the clan that wields large swords. He is my favorite player in the video game. Michaelangelo, the party dude, spins nunchukus to knock enemies senseless. Donatello cracks foes with a bo staff, while Raphael attacks with a pair of sai (Chinese forked knives). There is some variety in the game play as you coin-up to different players, thus different fighting tactics.

The head foe of the Turtles, and leader of the dreaded Foot Clan, is Krang. This brain creature lives within a robot that runs Technodrome, the bad guy headquarters. Krang's first in command is Shredder, a giant Ninja warrior with two wild boar loyals: Rock Steady and Be-Bop. These guys don't win any awards for brains, but it takes a while to defeat them and move on. Other enemies in the game include traditional armed Ninjas, Ninjas attacking in helicopters, and shocking robots.

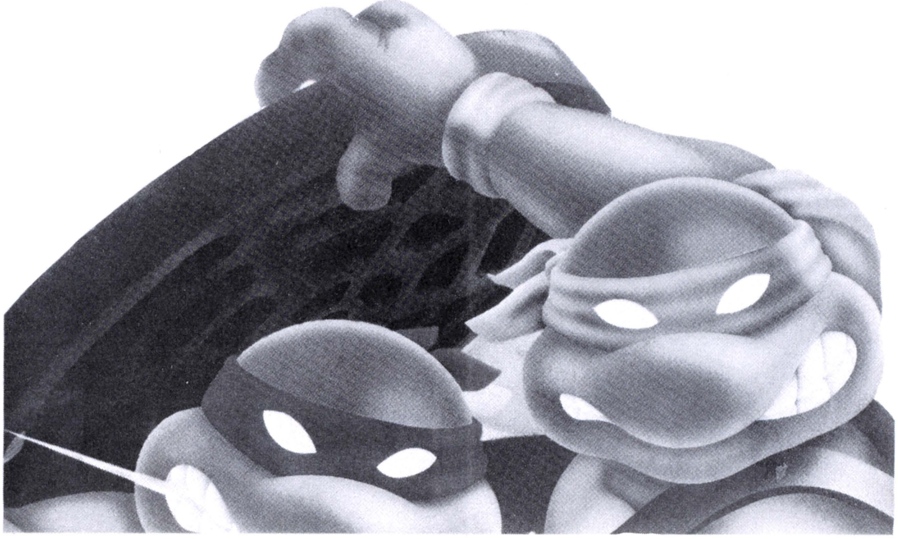
The game action begins with our fearless Turtles attempting to rescue their friend April, who is trapped in a burning building. They manage to rescue her, but she is then abducted by the evil Shredder (April is freed later in the game). The Turtles then proceed to rescue the Ninja Master, Splinter, who is bound to a wall in enemy-infested territory.

The Turtles fight their way down urban streets via jet-powered skateboards and Turtle party van. Once their two allies are freed, the amphibious crimefighters battle their way to the Foot Clan's secret headquarters, Technodrome. It is there that they meet up with Krang and his allies.

Game play is progressive, reminiscent of other hand-to-hand combat games like *Double Dragon*. Operators like the fact that when the game program is completed, it simply ends the game with some fancy acknowledgement to the game characters, creators, and programmers. I learned this programming fact with seven players remaining, at a price of two men for 25 cents. The game simply reset to attract mode at the end of this routine. Three kids who were playing quit instantly, obviously upset that they lost some credit. But the game was active moments later by new players.

TMNT is a game for kids that's doing great in mall game rooms and beach-front arcades. However, I wouldn't recommend this type of game for a bar or adult street location. Adults don't recognize the cartoon tie-in, and the game is only truly exciting when at least three players are active on the machine.

On a five-star scale, I give the dedicated *TMNT* four stars as an arcade game, but only two stars as an adult-oriented street piece. (I have not yet seen the *Play-Choice* two-player version.) Also, buy the TMNT promotional souvenirs and fill your merchandisers. Among kids, this cartoon is hot! ☐



Bonnie Theard

Prizes run gamut from head to heart

There's no end to the variety of prizes on the market this spring. Stock up for cranes, rotaries, and redemption counters with jaunty caps, gold-plated medallions, or plush animals that melt the heart.

Starting at the top, *Laramie Interests* offers a wide array of quality caps with licensed logos. Choose from a rebel cap with rebel flag and Alabama insignia, a Wild Turkey cap with that well-known bird, a Schlitz Malt Liquor-themed cap, and many other colorful selections—all with adjustable strap. For more information, call Laramie (800) 521-8697 or (800) 237-5874.

HMS Monaco introduces a new line of Sports Medallions saluting the popular sports of baseball, football, tennis, bowling, and basketball. The medallions are available as keychains or pendants, packaged in jewelry boxes priced at $18 per dozen, in large rotary cups at $16.50 per dozen, and in small rotary cups at $15.50 per dozen.

All are gold-plated with diamond-cut designs; pendants come with a chain 24 inches long. For more information, call HMS Monaco (800) 777-0901.

Dan Brechner & Co. has melt-your-heart, seven-inch Curious Bears (#50-885) in warm colors of red, blue, lavender, and deep pink; seven-inch Playful Pandas (#50-879) in a restful pose; nine-inch Cuddle Monkeys (#50-877) in pastel yellow, blue, and pink; and nine-inch Doctor Bears in the primary colors with gold patches and sunglasses. For more information, call Dan Brechner (800) 645-8142. ☐

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Program #2 Semiconductors — Approximately 30 minutes — $29.95

Semiconductors are electronic components like diodes and transistors. Many of the failures we encounter in electronic games can be traced to a semiconductor failure. This program covers the semiconductor components that are found in videogames and pinball machines. Topics include identification, testing and obtaining replacement components. This lesson is a **MUST** for the novice technician.

Program #3 Power Supplies Parts 1 & 2 — Approximately 60 minutes — $49.95

Power supplies are easy to understand and to repair. This two part lesson covers both power supplies and voltage regulator circuits in great detail. This program is a recommended prerequesite for those wishing to learn to repair videogame monitors as many monitor problems can be traced to failures in the monitor's power supply.

Program #4 Raster Scan Monitors — Approximately 60 minutes — $49.95

The popularity of conversion kits in today's operations means that videogame monitors must be kept operating longer than ever before. This lesson details the operation of monitors and outlines many of the common problems you can expect to encounter. Monitor safety is also covered in this lesson.

Program #5 The Digital Multimeter — Approximately 30 minutes — $29.95

The DMM is the single most important piece of test equipment you can use on your route. This lesson shows you how to use the DMM to make all of the tests and measurements necessary for repairing games. I believe this is the single most important program in the videotape training series.

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Dribbles Jr. Basketball

Betson Enterprises and Doyle & Associates have combined talents to debut a new junior basketball game for the redemption market. Called *Dribbles*, the game is especially designed for children.

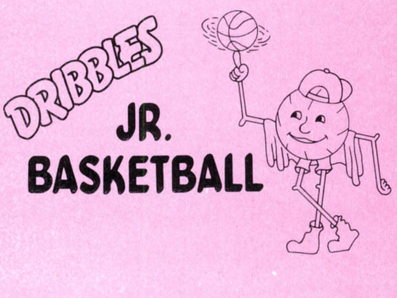
Betson has supplied the software design, artwork, and sound; Doyle is handling cabinetry and manufacturing. Both companies will be marketing the game and both exhibited *Dribbles* at their ACME booths.

The game features vibrant graphics and speech, including an attract mode that says, "Hey, kids! Want to shoot some hoops?"

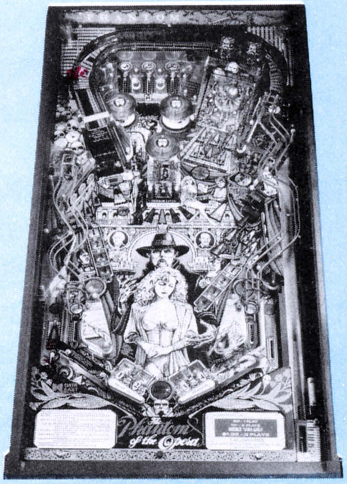
Dribbles avoids the intimidation of a rigid timer and sets the game for a specified number of shots per game. A ticket dispenser has been built into the unit.

As an extra special tie-in, there is a plush *Dribbles* character available from Dan Brechner & Co., which can be a featured prize at the redemption counter. The plush figure has an orange face and is outfitted in green hat, shirt, and shoes (the designer is a big Celtics fan).

For more information, or distributor referral, write to either Betson or Doyle: Betson Enterprises Inc., 6 Empire Blvd., Moonachie, NJ 07074; (800) 524-2342 or (201) 440-2200; FAX 201-440-4463; Doyle & Associates, P.O. Drawer 49467, Sarasota, FL 34230; (813) 351-2835; FAX 813-351-8357.



Phantom of the Opera



Following on the heels of the successful play by the same name, Data East introduces a classic pinball thriller, *Phantom of the Opera*. This game marks the return of the famed pinball artist Paul Faris.

Phantom of the Opera features solid state flippers, digital stereo sound, a unique opening and closing organ, and secret passageway.

A new backglass printing technique allows the phantom's face to be unmasked before the players' eyes. Of particular note are new gold microswitches on the flipper buttons, and ultra locktite on such features as the magic mirror shot and two- and three-ball multiball play, as well as the mechanical secret passageway.

Players can look for numerous skill shots, multiball, jackpot, one million and 10 million point shots, double score, and a trap door effect to score a mystery score value.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Data East USA, Inc., 1850 Little Orchard, San Jose, CA 95125; (408) 286-7080; FAX 408-971-0722.

Search and Rescue

SAR
SEARCH AND RESCUE

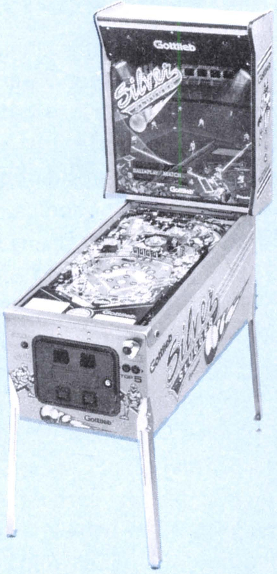
SNK brings a space battle to the video screen with *Search and Rescue*, a two-player cooperative vertical upright housed in a 19-inch works-in-a-drawer cabinet. The cabinet is manufactured by 3-KOAM Co. in California.

Here's the game scenario: an interplanetary vehicle has vanished off its projected course. Two men are sent down to investigate and determine the cause of the disappearance. Once on the scene, they meet with monster robots and alien life forms; then a battle for survival ensues.

Search and Rescue uses SNK's own rotary joystick, but operators can change these to standard eight-way joysticks if desired by flipping a switch on the dipswitch settings. Vibrant screen graphics and eerie sound effects enhance play.

For more information, or distributor referral, write SNK Corp. of America, 246 Sobrante Way, Sunnyvale, CA 94086; (408) 736-8844; FAX 408-736-0466.

Silver Slugger



Premier Technology introduces a new Gottlieb pinball, *Silver Slugger*, just in time for baseball season.

A futuristic sports game, *Silver Slugger* features a baseball diamond on both the colorful playfield and backglass. The cabinet is done in a bright yellow with red and silver accents.

Designers have tried to make *Silver Slugger* an extremely ''adaptable'' game, tailoring it for redemption purposes with pre-wiring for a ticket dispenser.

Street and arcade operators can make use of the pre-wiring and add an electromechanical coin counter meter. The game also has an optional door with one coin slot and a slot for a dollar bill validator. The company indicates that ''through manufacturing efficiencies and design efforts the price of the game will be reduced considerably.''

For more information, or distributor referral, write Premier Technology, 759 Industrial Drive, Bensenville, IL 60106; (800) 444-0761 or (708) 350-0400; FAX 708-350-1097.

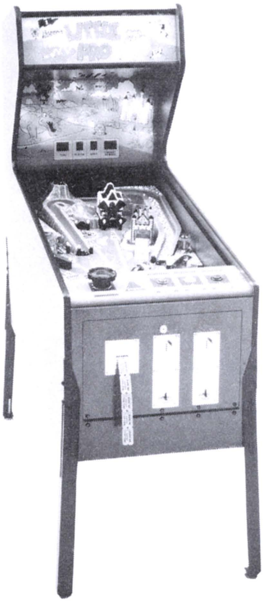
Little Pro

Bromley Inc., a new coin-op company, has developed *Little Pro*, an electromechanical game that features a miniature golf course set in a pinball-style cabinet that is smaller and lower in size than a regular pinball game.

Designed for children, *Little Pro* is a novelty piece that features an alligator, a Dutch windmill, a volcano ramp, ice mountain, and a castle with moving drawbridge.

Players use a golfer named Marty to aim at the holes and complete a round of miniature golf with as few strokes as possible. If a player hits the jackpot on Hole 9 he is awarded 10, 15, 25, or 50 tickets, depending on the operator setting for the game.

The golfer is controlled by a knob and three microswitch buttons that allow a choice of soft, medium, and hard stroke for his shot.



For more information, write Ameri Corporation, exclusive U.S. distributors for the game, 3955 Suffolk, Hoffman Estates, IL 60195; (708) 934-0661. Outside the U.S., write Bromley, Inc., 3231 W. Victoria St., Chicago, IL 60659; (312) 267-6030.

Whirlwind

Williams Electronics debuts *Whirlwind*, another pinball creation from designer Pat Lawlor. This one features three counter-rotating spinning discs, six jet bumpers, and skyway ramps.

In addition, players are treated to an all-new Million Plus three-ball multiball reward that progressively increases to score two million points the first time, three million points the next time, and so on.

A backbox displaying Super Cellar Door Value provides seven distinct bonus rewards, including the potential for Quick Multi-Ball and Unlimited Million Point scoring. When all seven features have been lit, players have the chance to achieve Mega-Door features rewarding their maximum value and the chance for an extra ball or special.

Of particular interest is a windmaker mounted on the top of the backglass. *Whirlwind* recognizes the all-time highest scorer; the feature is operator resettable only through the game's diagnostics. To help in game promotions, Williams has *Whirlwind* T-shirts available.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Williams Electronics Games Inc., 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; (312) 267-2240; FAX 312-267-8435.

WHIRLWIND
Williams
Williams
WHIRLWIND
SUPER CELLAR DOOR VALUE

Cadash

Taito introduces a new two-player kit, *Cadash*, that presents players with a difficult and challenging journey on a mission to rescue a king's daughter.

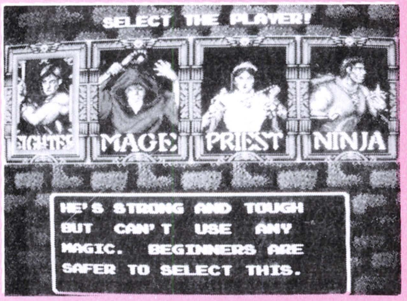
The "heavy" at the center of the kidnapping plot is Barrog, incarnation of evil; Princess Sarasa is the captive maiden. Players can choose to be one of four players attempting the rescue.

Role-playing choices are: the Fighter, who has the best attacking power and persistence; the Magician, who uses strong magical powers; the Priest, who has protective magic; or the Ninja, who can move the quickest and attack enemies with his knife-throwing ability.

Players stop and talk to other travelers along their way and receive tips on the best methods of combating each challenge. Each level has unusual and increasingly vicious adversaries. As a reward for victory, some of the defeated foes turn into bags of gold.

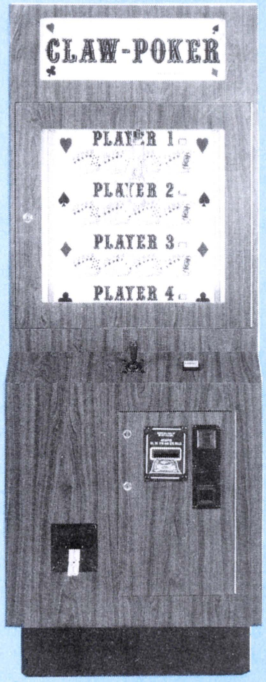
Along the way, players find little inns where they may rest awhile, recover their strength, and trade the gold for stronger weapons and potions.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Taito America Corp., 390 Holbrook Drive, Wheeling, IL 60090; (708) 520-9280; FAX (708) 520-1309.



HE'S STRONG AND TOUGH BUT CAN'T USE ANY MAGIC. BEGINNERS ARE SAFER TO SELECT THIS.

Claw-Poker



Bush Electronics brings an unusual game to the marketplace with *Claw-Poker*, which rewards skill with coupons redeemable by mail. Available prizes are posted with the machine and change periodically.

In *Claw-Poker*, players use a joystick to move the claw and pick up a sponge ball, then drop it into one of 20 holes in the playfield. Each hole represents a playing card that can make up a poker hand. Coupons are awarded for the poker hands. The maximum total coupons per player, per game is 14.

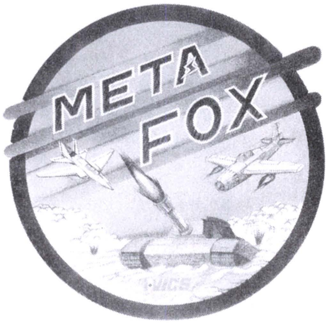
Among the playing cards, the four aces and joker are worth two coupons each; the ten, jack, queen, and king of hearts give one coupon each; the other cards do not award any coupons. The game lends itself to competition among friends for the most coupons and best poker hands.

A redemption center in Michigan has been established to handle the exchange of coupons for prizes. Over 10,000 different items are offered, including housewares, luggage, jewelry, toys, clothing, and electronic equipment.

The game is housed in a woodgrain cabinet that measures 28 inches wide, 36 inches deep, and 75 inches high. All electronics and the power supply are accessible through the back panel; components are 100 percent solid-state. A bill acceptor that takes $1, $5, $10, and $20 bills is standard along with a ticket dispenser.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Bush Electronics Inc., 5359 Dixie Hwy., Saginaw, MI 48601; (517) 777-8490; FAX 517-777-8140.

Meta Fox



I-VICS presents a two-player interactive vertical kit, *Meta Fox*, that brings players exciting aerial combat action.

This combat adventure game offers continuation and buy-in features that encourage continued play. Players progress from a Corsair jet to an F-36 Sabre to a FA-18 Hornet and earn increased fire power while avoiding a variety of assaults from all directions.

Quick reflexes and combat savvy are needed to progress through the games's many stages. Action occurs in air to sea, air to land, and air to air battle scenes.

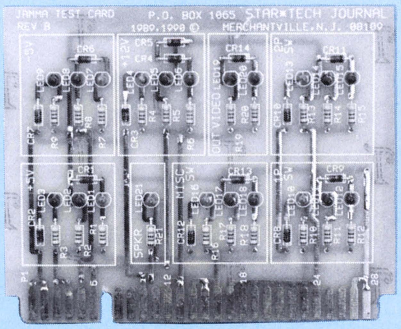
For more information, or distributor referral, write I-VICS Inc. (International Video Consumer Systems), 1900 Wyatt Drive, Suite 3, Santa Clara, CA 95054; (408) 492-1296; FAX 408-492-1299.

Test card

From Star Tech Journal comes a JAMMA test card, a "$44 insurance policy" that checks out an entire video game wiring system before plugging in the $1,000 logic board. The test card will alert you to power supply voltages that are too low or too high.

The device also checks to see if your video and audio lines are clear. One- and two-player switches, slam, coin, and test switch inputs can all be checked as well. Virtually all of the inputs and outputs to the PCB are checked and visually indicated on the JAMMA test card.

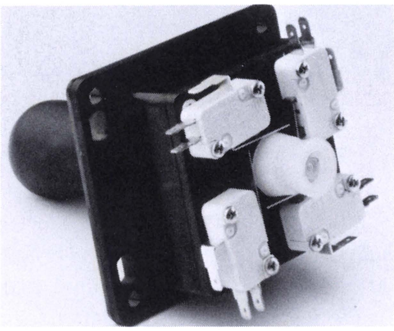
Potentially costly damage can be avoided by plugging the test card into the JAMMA video game harness (before your logic PCB) after game conversion, power supply substitution, harness replacement, or initial cabinet wiring. Star Tech Journal designed, developed, tested, and manufactured the cards for all JAMMA-compatible video game systems.



For more information on the test cards, which cost $44 plus $3.50 shipping ($9 air), contact Star Tech Journal, P.O. Box 1065, Merchantville, NJ 08109; (609) 662-1080; FAX (609) 488-9326.

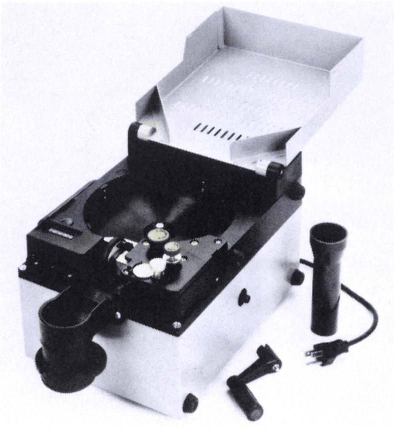
Joystick, Coin Counters

Happ Controls Inc. has released a new, heavy-duty joystick called the "Super Joystick." The product has such unique features as nylon and steel construction; solid-steel microswitches with individually replaceable metal actuators; spring return to the center; special handle design; nylon actuator for durability; and the capability to change actuation to four-way or eight-way by simply flipping the actuator over.



Prices for this joystick, Model 50-6034-00, are dependent on the quantity ordered.

Also, Happ Controls has a new line of portable coin counters that feature both mechanical and electrical models. These versatile models feature a metal coin tray and base, reversible motor, and five-digit resettable counter. The counter can count coins and tokens of almost any size and comes with a one-year warranty.



For more information, write Happ Controls Inc., 106 Garlisch, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007; (708) 593-6130; FAX (708) 593-6137.

Battle Shark

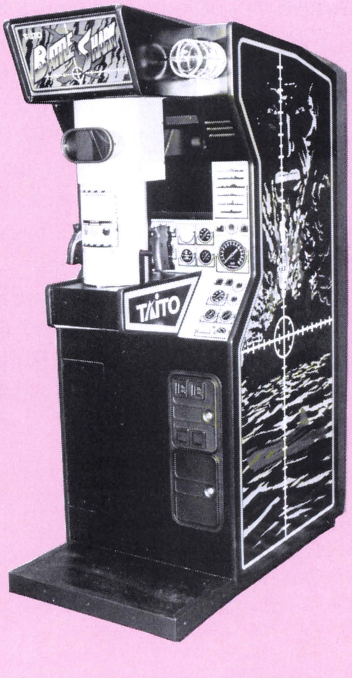
Taito introduces a new dedicated video, *Battle Shark*, that provides a realistic submarine patrol adventure.

In *Battle Shark*, the player becomes the commander of a super submarine and must pilot his craft through hostile seas. Scores of enemy craft attack from every direction and wreak havoc and destruction to the submarine.

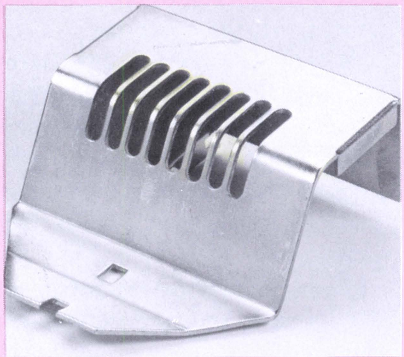
The game's cabinet visibly shakes and quivers as it takes direct hits from the antagonists that patrol the same waters. Players can physically see the damage as *Battle Shark* receives injury from each encounter and runs its collision course.

Players can use torpedoes at the start of a mission; shooting the allotted number with accuracy is important. Defeating major enemies and completing stages increases the number of torpedoes available for continued warfare. Picking up bonus mines can mean more fighting power, extra torpedoes, and damage repair.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Taito America Corp., 390 Holbrook Drive, Wheeling, Il 60090; (708) 520-9280; FAX 708-520-1309.



Coin funnel



ESD Inc. has developed a new vertical, grid-type funnel to replace existing coin funnels for higher security. It adapts to almost all machines and is constructed of 100 percent steel.

In addition to this coin funnel for four-coin and eight-coin vertical coin slides, ESD announces the release of the Standard V-5, a totally mechanical device without electronic parts. The Standard V-5 can simultaneously accept dimes, quarters, and dollar coins (the Canadian dollar "Loonies" or the U.S. dollar coin being proposed).

ESD manufactures products for the vending industry, including coin slides, money boxes, and high-security locks. The company also distributes brand-name, special application locks.

For more information, contact ESD Inc., P.O. Box 618, Dresher, PA 19025; (800) 523-1510 in the United States or (800) 328-1320 in Canada; FAX (215) 643-4623.

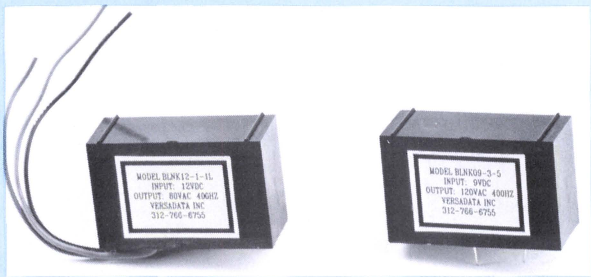
DC/AC inverter

Versadata introduces a new line of DC/AC inverters which control electroluminescent displays in a blinking (on-off) mode. Featuring input voltages of five to 24 VDC and output voltages of 80 to 120 VAC at 400 Hz, the inverters will energize EL panels from four inches square to 20 inches square with a 400ms on, 400ms off mode.

The inverters will virtually double battery life in mobile or emergency applications and increase viewer awareness. They simplify design time and cost in such applications as point-of-purchase displays, attractions, warning signs, and mobile applications.

The units are available in either hard wire or pin configurations; they measure .7'' wide by 1.75'' long by 1.125'' high. Versadata also produces custom configuration inverters designed for specific applications. The price is $5.27 in OEM quantities; delivery is 30 days.

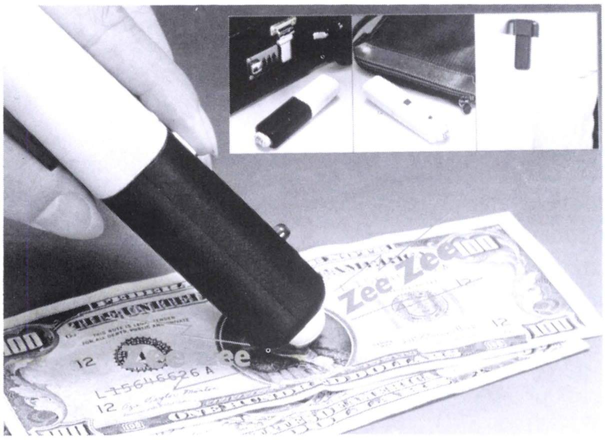
For more information, contact Versadata, Dept. 21, 790 Maple Lane, Bensenville, IL 60106; (708) 766-6755.



Counterfeit detector

Edwin Products has a new product to help detect counterfeit money. Designed with simplicity and priced moderately ($43.95), the sensor detects the metallic particles in the ink; they are located on the portrait and border on the front of money. Legal tender will activate a tiny LED indicator and buzzer to confirm the bill's authenticity. It operates on a 9v battery.

For more information, contact Edwin Products, 213-18 64th Ave., Bayside, NY 11364; (718) 225-0564.

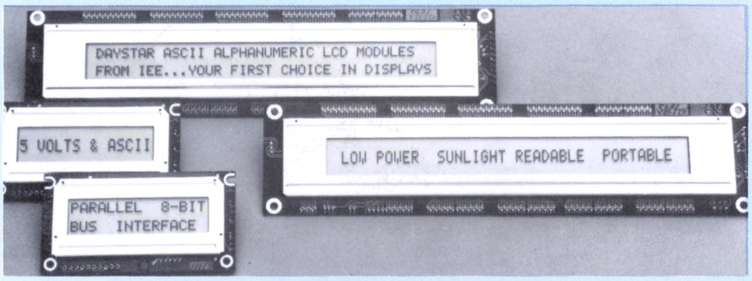


Display modules

The Component Products Division of IEE has unveiled a new line of LCD dot matrix alphanumeric display modules. They feature onboard controller/drivers that accept and decode ASCII data in a 35-pixel format. Alphanumeric characters are formed with a 5x7 pixel format with cursor and are available with eight, 16, 20, 24, 40, and 80 characters in one, two, or four lines.

Optional features include standard 0 to 50 degrees Celsius and wide -10 to 70 degrees Celsius temperature ranges; standard twisted nematic (TN) and super twist nematic (STN) fluids and backlight via electroluminescent (EL) or light emitting diodes (LED). Popular models are available from stock, while others require a six- to eight-week lead time. Prices start at $15.40 in 100 quantity for a 1x16 format.

For more information, contact IEE, Component Products Division, 7740 Lemona Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91409-9234; (818) 787-0311.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PARALLEL 8-BIT
BUS INTERFACE

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This product can be applied without sagging or dripping, even on vertical surfaces. It has excellent adhesion to metals, glass, ceramics, wood, vulcanized rubbers, and many plastics. Supreme 11AO produces durable, tough bonds that are highly resistant to thermal cycling and chemicals. The shelf life for Supreme 11AO, in original closed containers, is greater than one year. It's available in pint, quart, gallon, and five-gallon kits.

For more information, contact James Brenner, Master Bond Inc., 154 Hobart St., Hackensack, NJ 07601; (201) 343-8983. ☐

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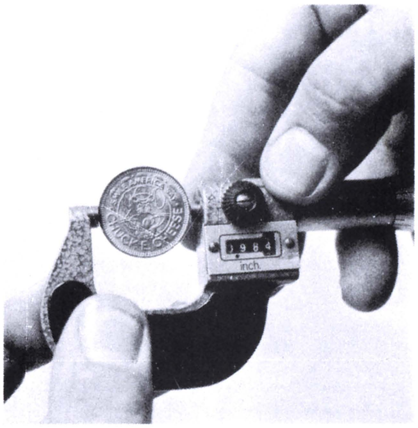
Quality control personnel at Hoffman & Hoffman checking diameter of token with micrometer

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Bill,

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1. Should I rotate the Double Dragon at Quick Mart?
2. Did you want to put another machine into Zak's Pizza?
3. Should we sell one of our Main Events?
4. Do you want me to pull everything from Video Theatre this week?
5. Does Hilda have my collection reports ready for tomorrow?

Charles

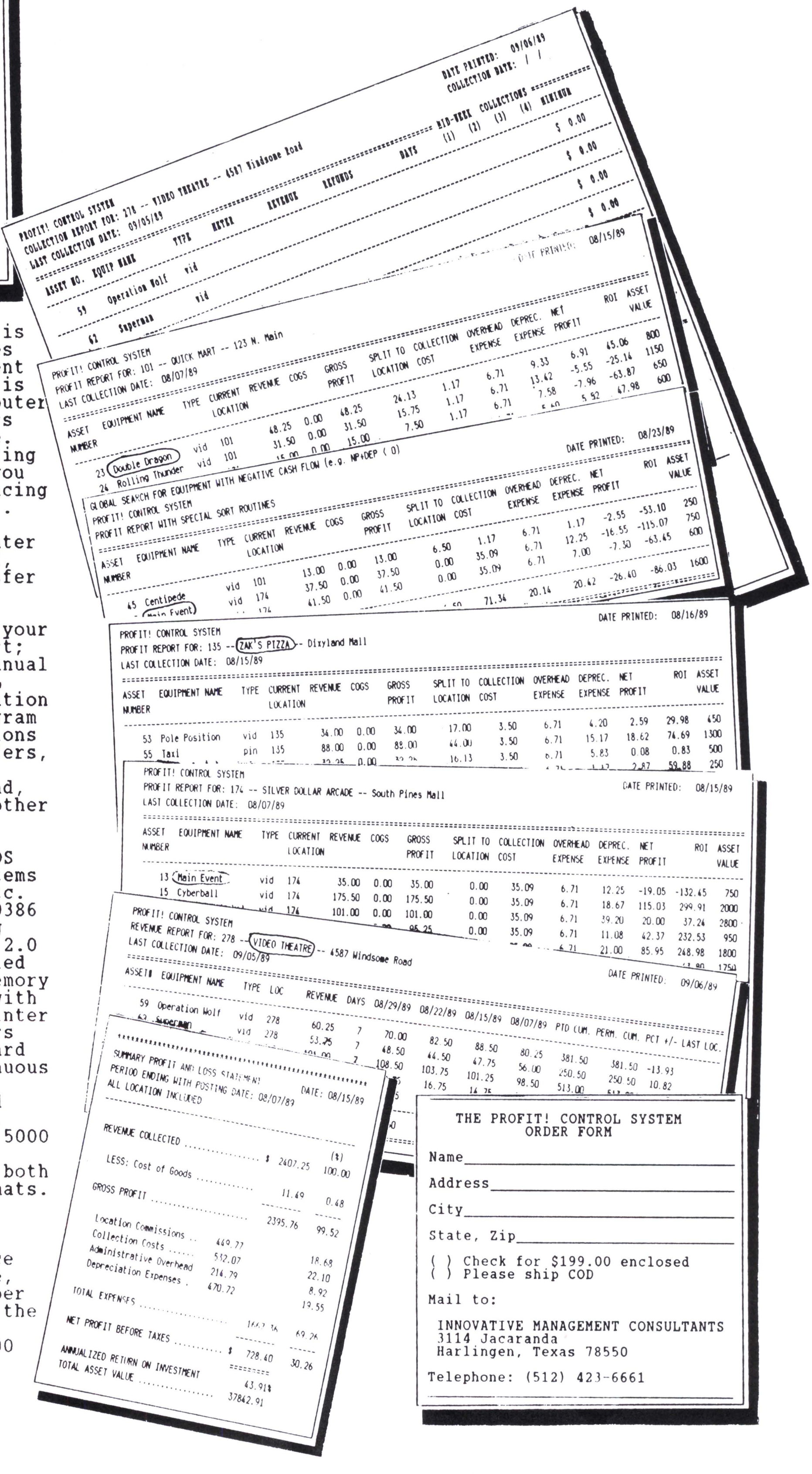
The PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM is computer software that takes control of all your amusement or vending equipment. Here is software for your microcomputer that calculates and delivers profits to your bottom line. It is not a general accounting package; its a system for you if you manage revenue-producing equipment (arcade or route). It makes every machine and every location a profit center and focuses on profits, ROI, collection histories, transfer dates, and meter readings.

And getting the answers to your questions is no great effort; our 70+ page instruction manual explains THE PROFIT CONTROL SYSTEM in detail. Installation is quick and using the program is easy. Entering collections is simple; equipment transfers, different token rates, and minimums are no problem. And, you never have to write another collection ticket by hand.

Here are the details. MS/DOS compatible for popular systems like IBM, Compaq, Tandy, etc. based on 8086, 80286, or 80386 microprocessors. Operating System: MS/DOS (or PC/DOS) 2.0 or higher. Language: Compiled QuickBasic by Microsoft. Memory Requirement: Minimum 256k with two disks or harddisk. Printer Requirements: 132 characters per line capacity in standard or compressed print, continuous paper feed recommended. Equipment Capacity: Limited only by disk storage space. Practical limits are 50 to 5000 pieces of equipment. Disk Format: All orders include both 3-1/2" and 5-1/4" disk formats.

HOW TO ORDER

Call (512) 423-6661 to place your order. Give your name, address, and telephone number and we'll ship COD or mail the order form along with your check for $195.00 plus $4.00 postage ($199.00).



```
PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM                                              DATE PRINTED: 09/06/89
COLLECTION REPORT FOR: 278 -- VIDEO THEATRE -- 4587 Windsome Road   COLLECTION DATE: / /
LAST COLLECTION DATE: 09/05/89
ASSET NO. EQUIP NAME       TYPE   METER   REVENUE   REFUNDS   DAYS   MID-WEEK COLLECTIONS   MINIMUM
                                                                     (1)  (2)  (3)  (4)
   59     Operation Wolf   vid                                                              $ 0.00
   62     Superman         vid                                                              $ 0.00
                                                                                            $ 0.00
                                                                                            $ 0.00
```

```
PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM                                                            DATE PRINTED: 08/15/89
PROFIT REPORT FOR: 101 -- QUICK MART -- 123 N. Main
LAST COLLECTION DATE: 08/07/89
ASSET  EQUIPMENT NAME   TYPE CURRENT  REVENUE COGS  GROSS  SPLIT TO COLLECTION OVERHEAD DEPREC. NET    ROI    ASSET
NUMBER                       LOCATION               PROFIT LOCATION COST       EXPENSE  EXPENSE PROFIT        VALUE
  23 Double Dragon  vid  101   68.25  0.00  68.25   26.13   1.17   6.71    9.33    6.91   65.06   800
  26 Rolling Thunder vid 101   31.50  0.00  31.50   15.75   1.17   6.71   13.62   -5.55  -25.14  1150
                               15.00  0.00  15.00    7.50   1.17   6.71    7.58   -7.96  -63.87   650
                                                                                   5.52   47.98   600
```

```
GLOBAL SEARCH FOR EQUIPMENT WITH NEGATIVE CASH FLOW (e.g. NP+DEP ( 0)             DATE PRINTED: 08/23/89
PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
PROFIT REPORT WITH SPECIAL SORT ROUTINES
ASSET  EQUIPMENT NAME   TYPE CURRENT  REVENUE COGS  GROSS  SPLIT TO COLLECTION OVERHEAD DEPREC. NET    ROI     ASSET
NUMBER                       LOCATION               PROFIT LOCATION COST       EXPENSE  EXPENSE PROFIT         VALUE
  45 Centipede      vid  101   13.00  0.00  13.00    6.50   1.17   6.71    1.17   -2.55   -53.10   250
     Main Event     vid  174   37.50  0.00  37.50    0.00  35.09   6.71   12.25  -16.55  -115.07   750
                         174   41.50  0.00  41.50    0.00  35.09   6.71    7.00   -7.30   -63.45   600
                                                            71.34  20.14   20.62  -26.40   -86.03  1600
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PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM                                                            DATE PRINTED: 08/16/89
PROFIT REPORT FOR: 135 -- ZAK'S PIZZA -- Dixyland Mall
LAST COLLECTION DATE: 08/15/89
ASSET  EQUIPMENT NAME   TYPE CURRENT  REVENUE COGS  GROSS  SPLIT TO COLLECTION OVERHEAD DEPREC. NET    ROI    ASSET
NUMBER                       LOCATION               PROFIT LOCATION COST       EXPENSE  EXPENSE PROFIT        VALUE
  53 Pole Position  vid  135   34.00  0.00  34.00   17.00   3.50   6.71    4.20    2.59   29.98   650
  55 Taxi           pin  135   88.00  0.00  88.00   44.00   3.50   6.71   15.17   18.62   74.69  1300
                                      0.00          16.13   3.50   6.71    5.83    0.08    0.83   500
                                                                                   2.87   59.88   250
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```
PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM                                                            DATE PRINTED: 08/15/89
PROFIT REPORT FOR: 174 -- SILVER DOLLAR ARCADE -- South Pines Mall
LAST COLLECTION DATE: 08/07/89
ASSET  EQUIPMENT NAME   TYPE CURRENT  REVENUE COGS  GROSS  SPLIT TO COLLECTION OVERHEAD DEPREC. NET     ROI     ASSET
NUMBER                       LOCATION               PROFIT LOCATION COST       EXPENSE  EXPENSE PROFIT          VALUE
  13 Main Event     vid  174   35.00  0.00  35.00    0.00  35.09   6.71   12.25  -19.05  -132.45   750
  15 Cyberball      vid  174  175.50  0.00 175.50    0.00  35.09   6.71   18.67  115.03   299.91  2000
                    vid  174  101.00  0.00 101.00    0.00  35.09   6.71   39.20   20.00    37.24  2800
                                            95.25    0.00  35.09   6.71   11.08   42.37   232.53   950
                                                                   6.71   21.00   85.95   248.98  1800
                                                                                                  1750
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PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
REVENUE REPORT FOR: 278 -- VIDEO THEATRE -- 4587 Windsome Road
LAST COLLECTION DATE: 09/05/89                                                    DATE PRINTED: 09/06/89
ASSET# EQUIPMENT NAME  TYPE LOC  REVENUE DAYS 08/29/89 08/22/89 08/15/89 08/07/89 PTD CUM. PERM. CUM. PCT +/- LAST LOC.
  59 Operation Wolf    vid  278   60.25   7    70.00    82.50    88.50    80.25   381.50    381.50    -13.93
  62 Superman          vid  278   53.75   7    48.50    44.50    47.75    56.00   250.50    250.50     10.82
                                          7   108.50   103.75   101.25    98.50   513.00
                                                        16.75    14.75
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****************************************************************
SUMMARY PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT
PERIOD ENDING WITH POSTING DATE: 08/07/89        DATE: 08/15/89
ALL LOCATION INCLUDED
-----------------------------------------------------------------
REVENUE COLLECTED ..................  $ 2407.25      (%)
                                                   100.00
   LESS: Cost of Goods ............     11.49        0.48
                                      --------     ------
GROSS PROFIT .......................   2395.76      99.52

   Location Commissions ..  449.77                 18.68
   Collection Costs ......  532.07                 22.10
   Administrative Overhead  214.79                  8.92
   Depreciation Expenses .  470.72                 19.55
TOTAL EXPENSES .....................   1667.36      69.26
                                      --------     ------
NET PROFIT BEFORE TAXES ...........  $  728.40      30.26
                                      ========
ANNUALIZED RETURN ON INVESTMENT          43.91%
TOTAL ASSET VALUE .................   37842.91
```

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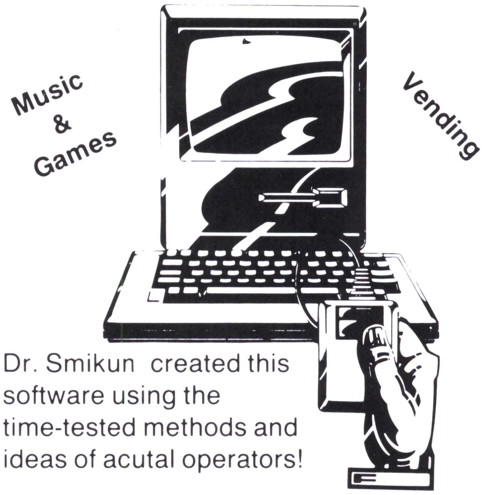

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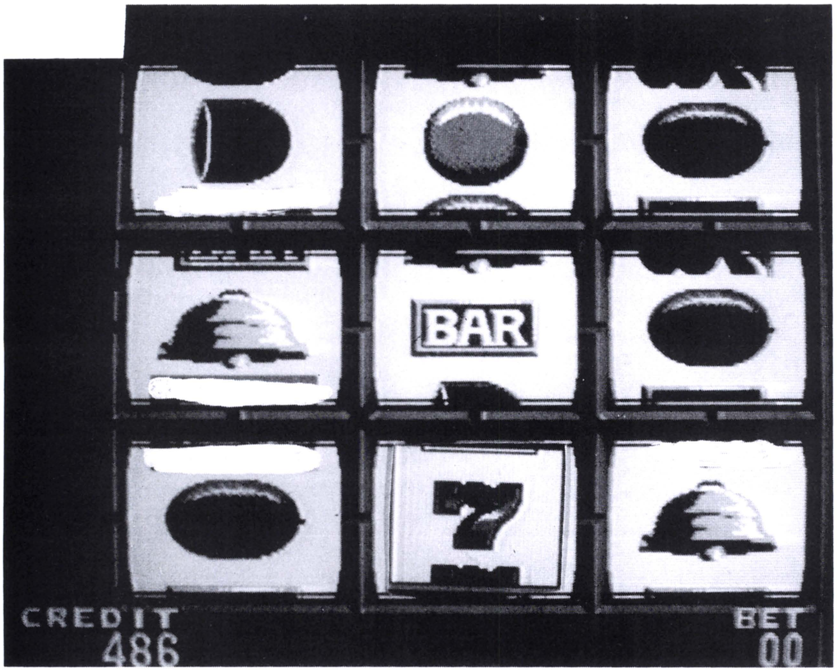

W-4

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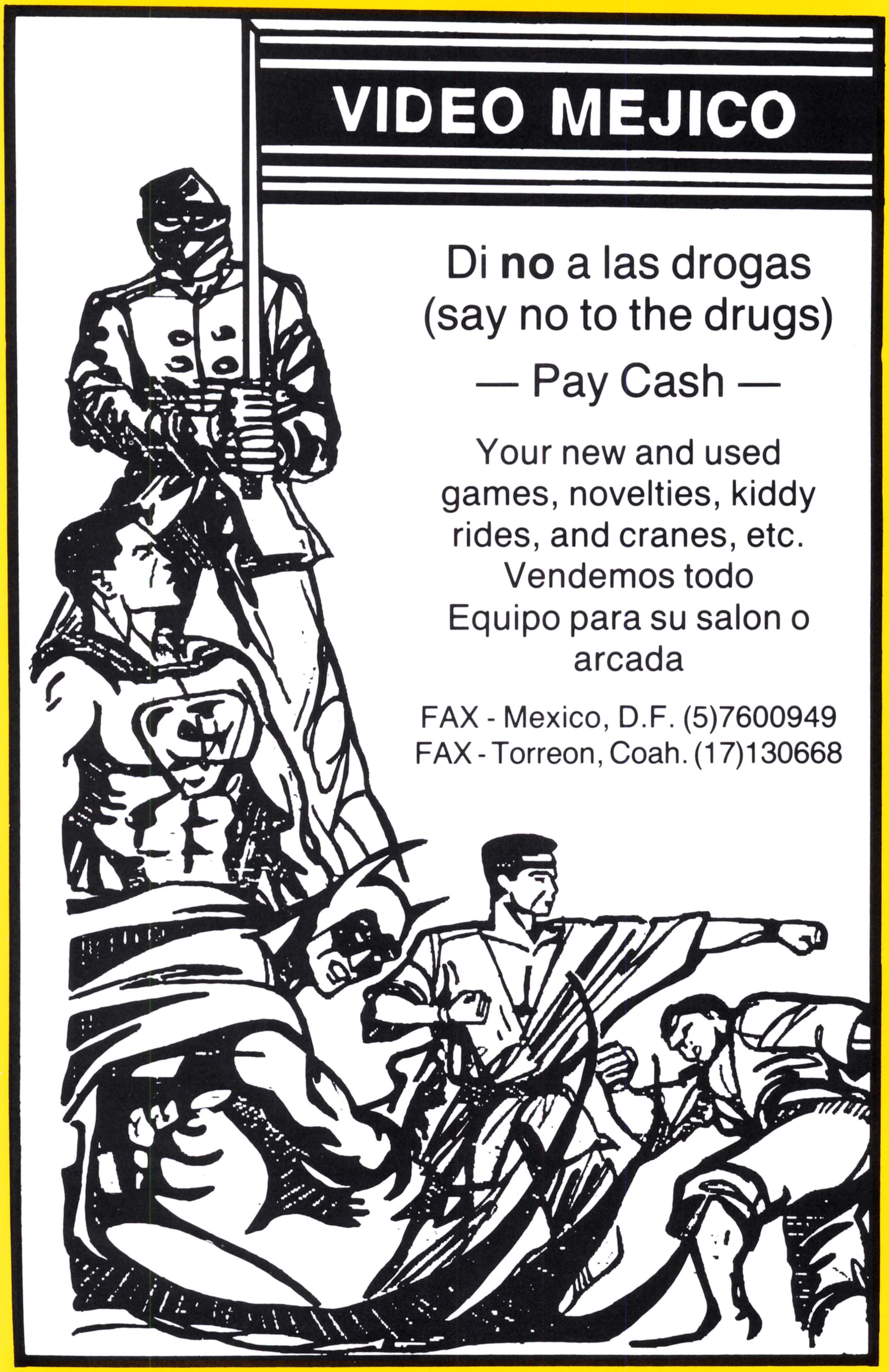

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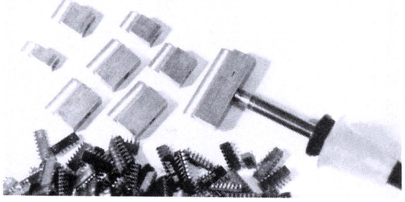

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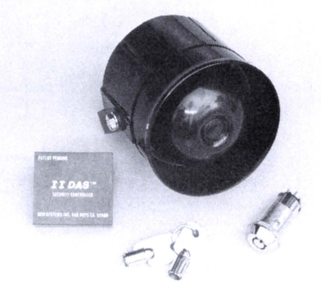

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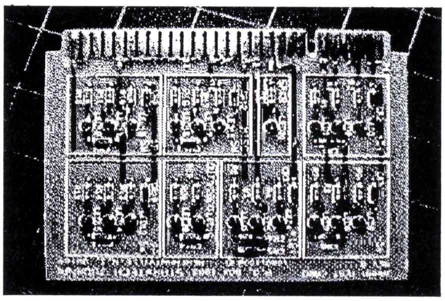

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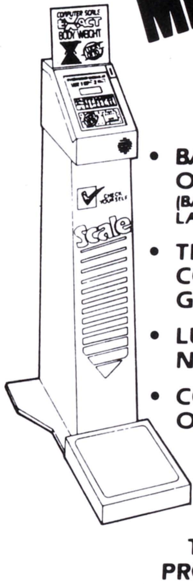

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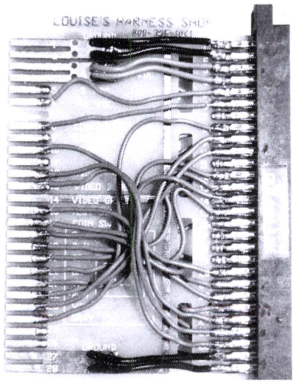

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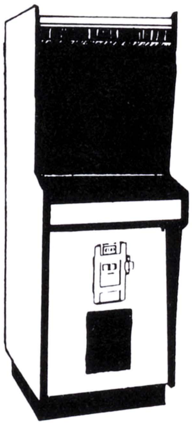

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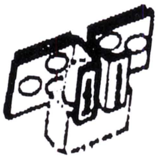

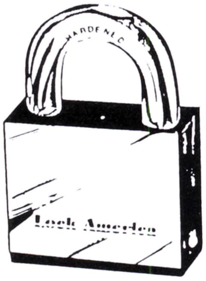

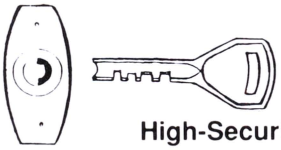

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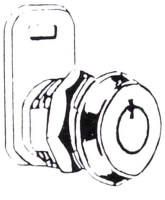

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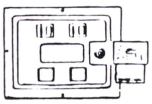

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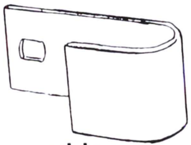

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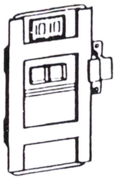

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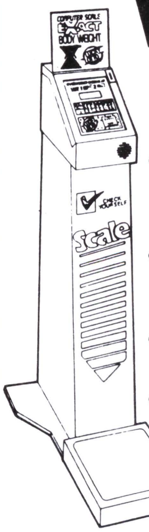

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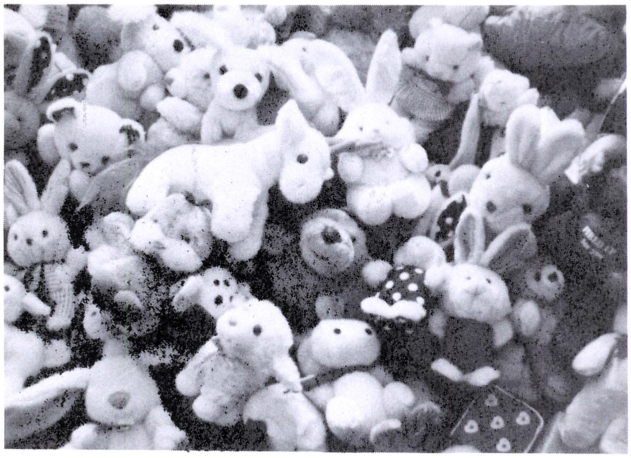

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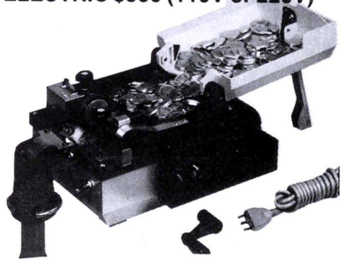

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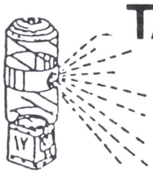

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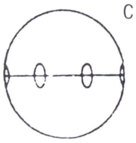

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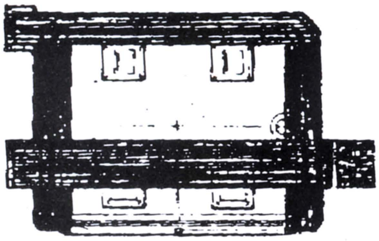

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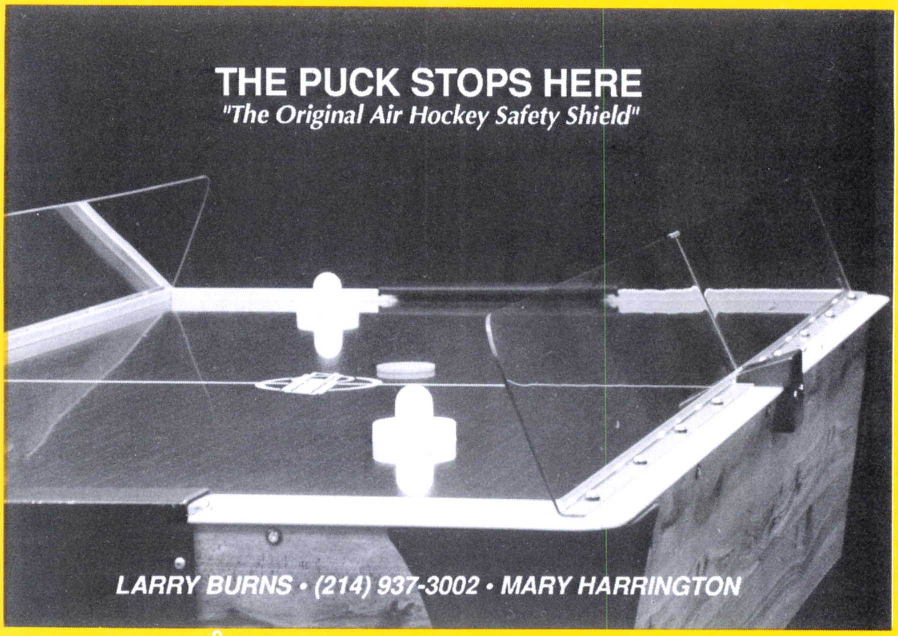

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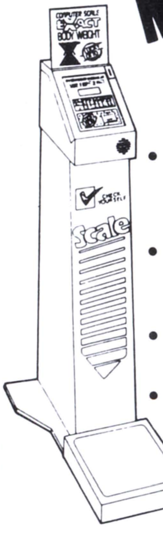

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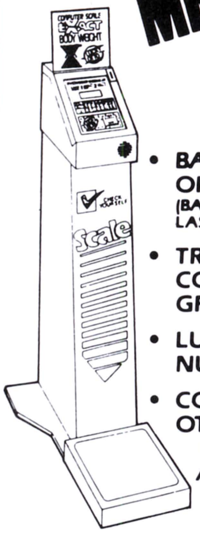

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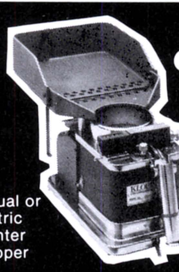

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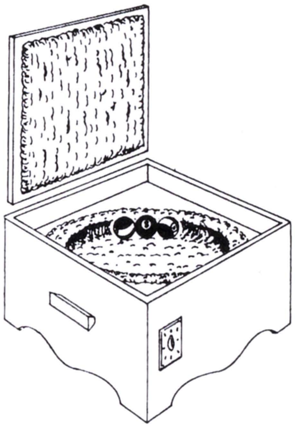

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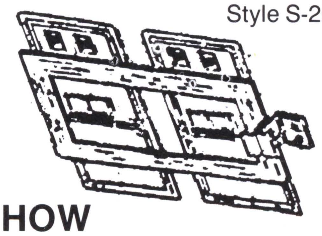

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A-1 PRODUCTS

THE CALENDAR

April 13-14
Washington Amusement and Music Operators Association (WAMOA) Northest Expo, Bellevue, Wash. Contact Steve Anderson (206) 682-5700 or Jim Markham (206) 256-8062.

April 19-22
Florida Amusement and Vending Association (FAVA) Annual Convention and Trade Show, Omni Expo Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact FAVA (904) 878-3134.

April 21-22
Regional Seminar with Frank ''The Crank'' and Star Tech Journal, New England Coin, Norwood, Mass. Contact Frank Seninsky (201) 287-4990 or Jim Calore (609) 662-1080.

April 29-May 1
AMOA Government Affairs Conference, Washington Court Hotel, Washington, D.C. Contact AMOA (312) 644-6610 or direct (312) 565-4602.

May 2
American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) Annual Board Meeting and Election of Officers, Washington Court Hotel, Washington, D.C. Contact AAMA (703) 548-8044.

May 2-5
AMOA National Dart Association 5th Annual International Team Championship, Sahara Hotel, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Joe Conway (414) 263-2444.

May 3-6
California Coin Machine Association (CCMA) Annual Convention and Trade Show, Hyatt Grand Champions Resort, Indian Wells, Calif. Contact Cindy Urcan or Kathy Waldie (916) 441-5451.

May 4-6
Northeast Regional Amusement Machine Convention and Trade Show, Trump Regency, Atlantic City, N.J. Contact Sue Matterson (518) 439-0981.

May 11-12
Ohio Coin Machine Association (OCMA) Expo '90 Trade Show and Convention. Contact OCMA (614) 221-8600.

May 14-19
Randy Fromm's Arcade School, Orlando, Fla. Contact Randy Fromm, (619) 697-4035.

May 19-20
Regional Seminar with Frank ''The Crank'' and Star Tech Journal, Betson Pacific, San Francisco, Calif. Contact Frank Seninsky, (201) 287-4990 or Jim Calore (609) 662-1080.

June 7-9
Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators Association (WAMO) Spring Convention and Trade Show, Holiday Inn, Stevens Point, Wis. Contact WAMO (414) 529-4704.

June 15-17
Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association (ICMOA) Annual Meeting, Clarion Inn at Eagle Creek, Findley, Ill. Contact Ellen Donovan (708) 369-2406.

June 18-23
Randy Fromm's Arcade School, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Randy Fromm (619) 697-4035.

July 5-10
Coors Light World Series of Bar Games grand finale, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Arachnid Inc. (800) 435-8319 or (815) 644-0212.

July 19-21
Billiard Congress of America 7th Annual International Trade Expo, Commonwealth Convention Center, Louisville, Ky. Contact Frank Zdy (619) 278-3877; FAX 619-268-9372.

August 10-12
Amusement Music Operators of Tennessee (AMOT) General Membership Meeting and Trade Show, Vanderbilt Plaza, Nashville, Tenn. Contact Jan Green (901) 521-1234.

August 15-18
National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) National Education Conference, Ambassador West Hotel, Chicago, Ill. Contact Richard Geerdes (312) 346-0370.

September 17-22
Randy Fromm's Arcade School, Chicago, Ill. Contact Randy Fromm (619) 697-4035.

October 11-14
National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) National Convention and Exhibit of Vending and Foodservice Management, Orange County Convention/Civic Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact NAMA (312) 346-0370.

October 16-18
The 32nd Annual Convention and Trade Show of the Amusement and Music Operators of Virginia (AMOV), Cavalier Hotel, Virginia Beach, Va. Contact Charles Rowland (804) 262-9283.

October 25-27
Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) Expo '90, New Orleans Convention Center, New Orleans, La. Contact AMOA (312) 644-6610.

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Time for enlightenment

I recently received an interesting call from a woman in California. She was looking for articles or commentaries from Play Meter or outside media that extolled the virtues of coin-op in general, arcades specifically.

I told her that while Play Meter had files bulging with glowing accolades, ferreting out positive stories from non-industry media would prove next to impossible. In fact, I liken it to a search for stories trumpeting the praises of the Mafia, hemorrhoids, or garlic breath.

Let me give you an example. The magazine employs a newspaper clip service that sends us coin-op related articles from across the country. Aside from positive feature stories on jukeboxes, and to a lesser extent pinball machines, the rest have a negative slant. Common headlines include ''County Board Votes Down Proposed Arcade'' or ''Video Games Linked To Juvenile Delinquency.'' I'm waiting for ''Mass Murderer Inspired By Faulty Coin-Mech.''

It isn't my purpose to trace the causes of this image. We all know the root of the hysteria; sometimes it's been warranted, but usually—like most biases—the reasons are borne of ignorance and convoluted logic.

Rather, I would like to remind operators of the things this industry has done to make its members justifiably proud. When someone accuses you of being in a business that takes and takes, but never gives back, clear your throat and recite the following litany of recent accomplishments:

* The fundraising effort conducted by the American Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation, in conjunction with ACME '89, raised over $100,000 for the Tomorrow's Children charity. As we went to press, the numbers weren't in for the 1990 fundraiser, but organizers are hopeful that as much money—if not more—will be raised. How many industries can boast this kind of giving?

* The American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA), recognizing the opportunity to impact millions of young video game players, implemented a successful anti-drug abuse message into the attract mode of its member manufacturers' video games. The message—''Winners Don't Use Drugs''—gives kids positive reinforcement from a source they trust and often come into contact with. So kids crowded around videos are bound to be badly influenced, eh?

* The association released two public awareness posters in conjunction with the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse. Featuring baseball player Don Mattingly and former head football coach/TV analyst John Madden, the campaign raised public consciousness about this pervasive problem while promoting the ideal of family unity.

* AAMA and the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) set up a game room in Los Angeles for U.S. Olympic athletes during the summer of 1988. These athletes, weighted down with the pressures to succeed for not only themselves but their country, were able to unwind and take their minds off of the tasks that awaited them in Seoul, South Korea.

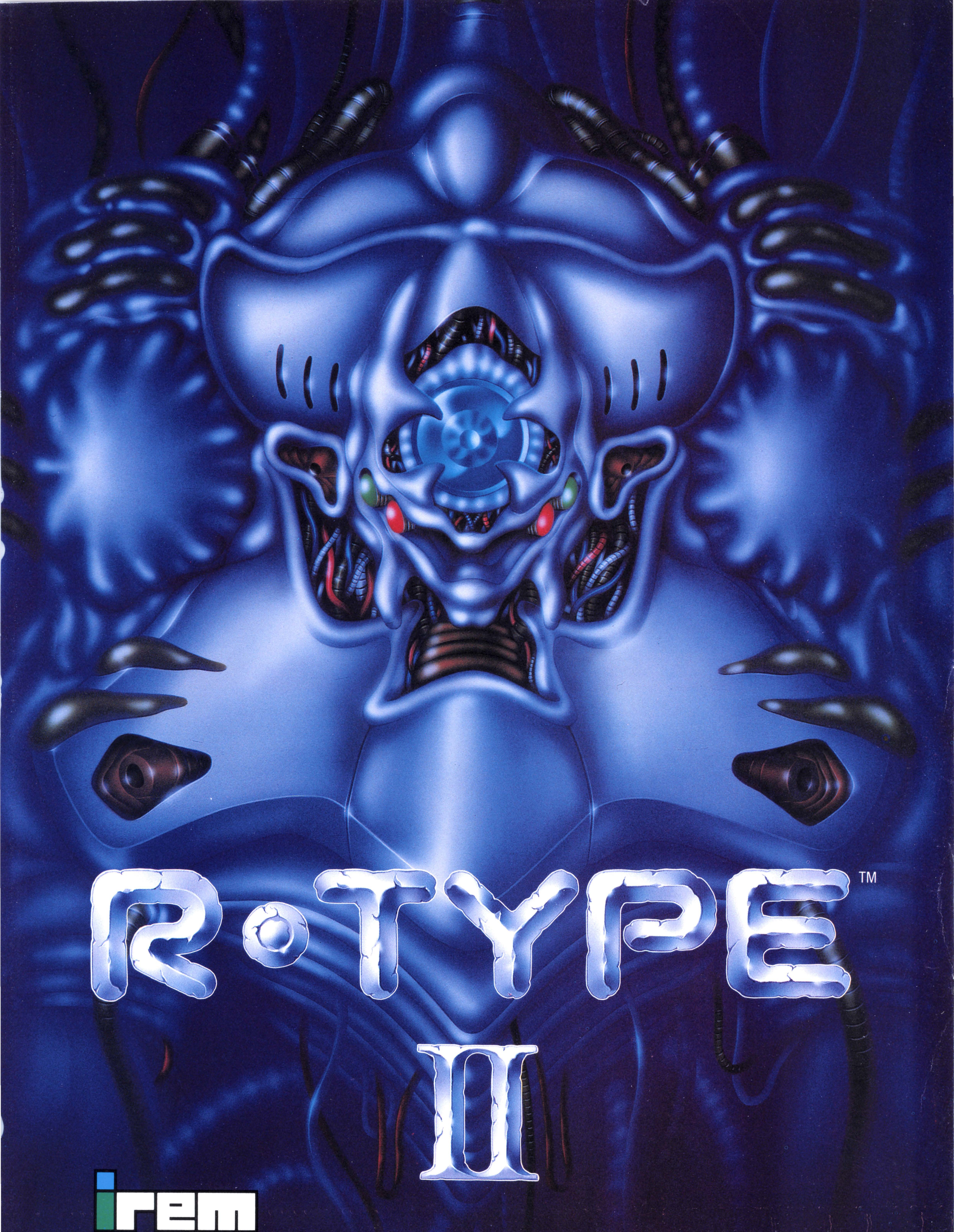
* The two associations also joined forces to institute a game donation program for Ronald McDonald Houses nationwide. The houses, which serve as a ''home away from home'' for parents and their ill children, received videos, pins, and other coin-op equipment. How nice to give these children and their families a respite from their pain—if only for a short while—so that they might experience something worth smiling about.

I could go on; these are but a few of the wonderful things our industry has taken part in during the past few years. I haven't even touched on the goodwill displayed by thousands of operators and distributors in their own cities or towns.

So the next time someone criticizes the coin-op industry as being a plague to American society, punch them in the mouth (just kidding). Seriously, though, let people know that our industry is a caring one. People may not know that yet; it's time they realized it. ☐

Christopher Caire

Christopher Caire
News Editor



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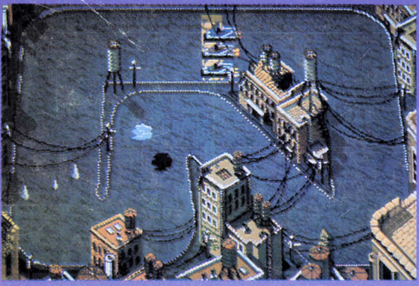
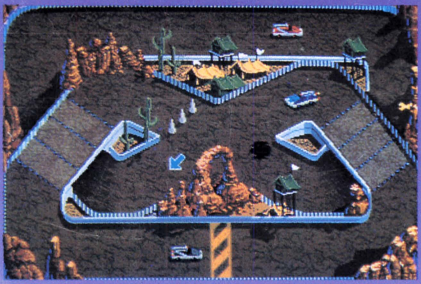
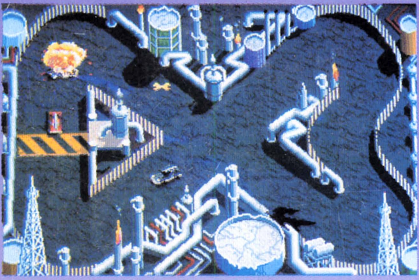
Badlands has eight unique track layouts set in eight different animated backgrounds that react to player shots and crashes. These tracks change as the level of difficulty increases.



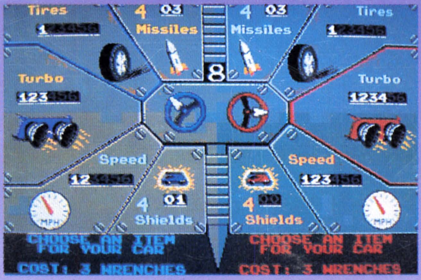
The city—watch out for falling power lines and the falling water tower.



The desert—the mountain will crumble and fall onto the track.



The refinery—be carefull of creating oil spills.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